This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

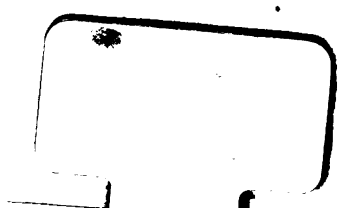
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

25.773



LEGENDS OF THE NORTH.

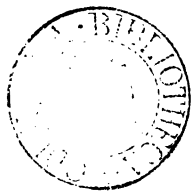
J. M. 1825

LEGENDS OF THE NORTH,

OR,

THE FEUDAL CHRISTMAS;

A Poem.



BY

MRS. HENRY ROLLS,

AUTHORESS OF "SACRED SKETCHES," "MOSCOW," "THE HOME OF LOVE," AND OTHER POEMS.

Bold Knights and fair Dames, to my Harp give an ear,
Of Love, and of War, and of Wonders, to hear!

TALES OF WONDER.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR W. SIMPKIN AND R. MARSHALL,

STATIONERS' HALL COURT, LUDGATE STREET.

MDCCCXXV.

773.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland-court.

PREFACE.

THE scene of this poem is Nappa Hall, situated in the beautiful and romantic dale of Wensley, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, of which Camden gives the following account:—

"The river *Ure* (Yore) hath his fall heere out of the westerne mountains; and, first of all, cutting through the middest of the vale *Wentsedale*, whiles it is yet but small, as being neere unto his spring head, where great flockes of sheep doe pasture, and which in some places beareth lead stones plentifully, is encreased by a little river comming out of the south, called

Baint, which, with a great noise, streameth out of the poole Semer (Simmer). Nappa is an house built with turrets, and the chief seat of the Medcalfs, thought to be at this day the greatest family for multitude, of the same name, in all England; for I have heard that Sir Christopher Medcalfe, Knight, and the top of this kinred, being, of late, high-sheriffe of the shire, accompanied with three hundred men of the same house all on horsback, and in a livery, met and received the justices of assizes, and so brought them to Yorke. From hence runneth Ure down a maine between two rockes, whereof the place is named *Ait-scarre* (Aisgarth), it runneth headlong downe, not far from Bolton, a stately castle, the ancient seat of the Barons Scrope, and which *Richard*, Lord *le Scrope*, and chancellour of England, under King Richard the Second, built with exceeding great coste,—and now bending his course eastward commeth to Midleham."

The supposed date of this poem is in the reign of Edward IV., when society had received some degree of polish, and many traces of chivalry and the feudal system still remained. The time occupied is from Christmas Eve to Twelfth Night.

Should it be objected that the language is too modern, the authoress trusts that the Public, from which she has met with so indulgent a reception of her former little productions, will favour her, by regarding these wild Legends as a free translation of the mode of speech used by our forefathers.

Aldwincle Rectory,
July, 1825.

For the following Errata, and a few small errors also in punctuation, the Authoress trusts to the kind indulgence of her Readers, having been deprived by distance of the opportunity of correcting the press in its progress.

ERRATA.

Page 37, line 13, *for* the, *read* his
67, — 2, *for* o'r, *read* o'er
70, — 15, *for* past, *read* pass'd
74, — 16, *for* appears, *read* appear
75, — 21, *for* my, *read* by
86, — 7, *for* dale, *read* vale
88, — 4, *for* surely, *read* sure
88, — 15, *for* joys, *read* bliss
93, — 5, *for* parting's, *read* partings
102, — 20, *for* rich'd, *read* rich
108, — 12, *for* sighs, *read* smiles
125, — 12, *for* or, *read* nor
142, — 12, *for* flagon, *read* flagons
145, — 3, *for* and, *read* can
211, — 8, *for* or, *read* nor
216, — 12, *for* the strangers, *read* that stranger
217, — 19, *for* hoes, *read* hopes.
227, — 9, *for* with, *read* the
235, — 18, *for* drooping, *read* downy
248, — 12, *for* to bear *to* your feet, *read* to bear your feet
249, — 4, *for* turning, *read* twining
251, — 11, *for* untrain'd, *read* unharm'd.
258, — 2, *for* bring, *read* brought
268, — 5, *for* inland, *read* island

TO

SIR WILLIAM HILLARY, BART.

OH thou, who in youth's earliest hours
Hast wander'd through these scenes sublime;
Accept this wreath of faded flowers,
Snatch'd from the withering grasp of Time!

Thou wilt not scorn the simple Muse,
That would their vernal bloom recal,
And wake to Memory's eye their hues,
Ere dark oblivion o'er them fall!

For thou hast lov'd the tales of old,
Of wandering Sprite, and fairy ring—
Of forms that sweep o'er heath and fold,
And songs which midnight spirits sing!

Thou oft, beside the cheerful flame,
Hast listen'd, with unwearied ear,
To story told by ancient dame,
Or the wild Legend of the Deer!

Though thou hast rov'd 'neath warmer skies,
In climes far nearer to the sun—
Seen mighty nations sink and rise,
And many a deed of valour done—

Though thou hast seen that beauteous land,
Where Virgil's lofty song arose—
Beheld the domes which Cæsar plann'd,
Whence Painting springs and Music flows—

Though thou hast rous'd * thy country's breast,
Her valiant sons to guard and save;
And made thy name for ever blest
By all who strive with storm and wave—

* The Royal National Institution originated through the efforts of Sir William Hillary, Bart., and was founded on the plans recommended in "*An Appeal to the British Nation on the Humanity and Policy of forming a National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck*," of which he was the author.

Yet, thou canst give the meed of praise
To Legends by thy Sister sung,
And bid the poet's prize—the bays—
Around her mountain harp be hung.

For still thou lovs't fair Wensley's dale,
Where thy forefathers dwelt of yore;
Then listen to each mystic tale,
Which paints their feudal days once more!

LEGENDS OF THE NORTH;

OR,

THE FEUDAL CHRISTMAS.

CHRISTMAS-EVE.

'Twas Christmas-Eve, and keen the blast
That down fair Wensley's valley pass'd,
And Yore's impetuous rapid stream
Wild sparkled in the moon's faint beam;
As rushing o'er the lofty rock
Of Aisgarth's scar, with sudden shock,
It pours its flood with deafening roar,
And spreads with deep-stain'd foam the shore;
And each wild crag and mountain cave
Sends back the echo of the wave;
It sounds o'er Aisgarth's lonely fell,
It swells down Cover's woodland dell,
Round Bolton's lofty towers it flies,
And soft at distant Middleham dies:

The falling flakes the plain o'erspread,
And wreath each lofty mountain's head;
Through the near woods the wild winds fly,
And bending oaks in groans reply.

Shelter'd secure by rock and shade,
But by bright gleaming lights display'd,
Stands Nappa's fair and ancient hall,
Where nightly pass'd the cheerful ball,
Or Christmas games the eve prolong,
The banquet gay, and lively song:
Late seated round the splendid board,
Were seen the guests of Nappa's Lord;
In costly robes, each stately dame
With rubies' glow or sapphire's flame,
Or diamond's purer light supplies
The faded charms of lips or eyes;
Whilst youthful beauty, soft and fair,
Displays the simply braided hair;
Or the pure pearl's mild soften'd glow,
Scarce fairer than the brow of snow.
Their shining arms now laid aside,
The corslet rich, the helmet's pride,
In cloak of silk or velvet fold
Each neighbouring Knight and Squire behold!

And holy Friar and reverend Priest
Join the gay train and bless the feast.

'Twere needless on the feast to dwell,
'Twas suited to the season well,
And proud as ever Baron gave
To Knight and Squire and feudal slave;
The golden goblet burnish'd bright,
The lamps and torches waving light,
The pledge, the laugh, the sportive jest
Are past—and ended is the feast.

Where warm and bright the flames aspire,
And cheerful glows the blazing fire,
Rich coats of armour, burnish'd bright,
Rang'd on the walls reflect the light;
The polish'd lance returns the rays,
Or shines the shield with broader blaze;
There, gain'd from every wood and scar,
Hang trophies of the sylvan war;
The antlers from the red-deer's head,
The fur for which the otter bled;
The fierce wolf s rough and shaggy hide,
The fallow-deer's so softly pied;

The boar's huge tusk, the heron's plume
Are ranged around that spacious room.
The cressets spread full light around,
At times is heard the harp's sweet sound;
Some walk or chat, or parties form,
But rages still the wintry storm;
And still does Beauty's changing cheek
Declare the fears she will not speak;—
Such checks to pleasure may befall,
E'en in the midst of festive hall.

The noble Trinian look'd around,
Nor wonted mirth or cheer he found;
He saw, within each gentle breast,
The storm had waked a gloomy guest;
The holy night the dance denied,
But not sweet music's melting tide;
This bade him on the minstrel call
To chase dull languor from the hall:
The Bard arose with reverend grace,
Calm was his brow, but in that face,
And in that eye you might perceive,
It once had been his lot to grieve;
Tall was his form, and thin and spare,
And white as snow his beard and hair;

Yet still at times that eye would beam,
As rose some dear poetic dream;
Again that faded cheek would glow,
Through the thin locks of silvery snow;
There was a theme, whene'er he sung,
To softer numbers tun'd his tongue;
His form more youthful seem'd to rise,
Whilst dwelling on his early joys;
And calling back each long-lov'd tale
Of Moss-dale's wild romantic vale: (1)
Lowly he bow'd, with graceful air,
Then leaning on his harp so fair,
He stood as erst the minstrel King
Who touch'd the sweetest holiest string,
The first who pour'd the tide of song
The harp's full swelling chords along:
Brave Trinian kindly mov'd and smil'd,
"Now tune," he cried, "some measure wild—
Or let some soft and melting lay
Speed this wild dreary night away;
Sweet Beauty's smile be thy reward,
The dearest prize of gifted Bard!"

Calmly the reverend Bard replied,
"A moral tale suits holy tide;

This is the only blessed night,
On which our church, with holy rite,
With blazing taper's shining ray,
Gives to midnight the light of day.
As songs of grateful rapture rise,
Soft swelling through the darken'd skies,
To sing the chase, or war's wild theme,
Or the young lover's soothing dream:
Would ill-prepare each gentle mind,
For transports of celestial kind;
Think not I blame the social hour,
Or scorn the brave or love's soft power;
But on the Eve of Christmas-day,
Best suits some useful moral lay;
Mine is a tale of mournful truth,
As warning told in early youth,
Though many a year has roll'd between,
Yet this fair mansion was its scene;
Knights and fair dames, attentive, hear!
I sing the Legend of the Deer." (*)

Legend of the Deer.

Here noble Harald dwelt of old,
Lov'd by the good, the fair, the bold;
And hither brought, in nuptial hour,
Fair Moss-dale's loveliest, sweetest flower;
Can Bard her numerous beauties trace—
The honors of her ancient race?
Years pass'd;—to fill their cup of joy,
Was sent the wish'd—long pray'd for boy;
That only wish of love and pride
They oft had deem'd too long denied;
The father clasp'd the darling child,
With fondest transport Emma smiled,
To each it seem'd life's dearest care,
To bless—to praise—to spoil—their heir.
The hapless infant's wayward hour
Ne'er felt the check of gentle power,

No sire his boyish will restrain'd,
Or wild impetuous spirit rein'd;
In earliest youth a tyrant grown,
No rule, no law, no right to own,
He deem'd was noble, manly, free,
And suited to his high degree;
His mother soft excuses made,
His sire too late with pain survey'd
The progress gain'd in early youth,
The love of vice, the scorn of truth,
Wild passion's fierce and dreadful power,
The revels of the midnight hour;
The eye that frantic rage express'd—
That spake the fury of the breast;
To man and beast the savage hand,
The hate, the terror of the land;
All bade the sire the son restrain,
All, all, alas! too late, too vain!
He could that tender parent brave,
Declared he scorned the duteous slave;—
That none should dare to bar his right,
Or if they did,—that instant flight—
—Then paus'd, and cast a glance around,
And left his sire in woe profound.

Again is told the dreadful tale,
The sufferings of each neighbouring dale;
Once more a father's power he tries,
And the ill-fated Oswald flies!

Can words that father's anguish speak,
Or shew the tears that dew his cheek?
Or tell the woe and wild despair,
That the sad mother's bosom tear?
In vain th' unwearied search is made,
Through hall and cote and forest shade,
Now sooth'd by hope, now chill'd by fear,
No tidings of their son they hear;
Just anger in the father's breast
The tide of grief now half repress'd,
But the fond mother's softer heart
Still closer press'd th' envenom'd dart;
She dwelt upon each opening grace
That deck'd his smiling infant face,
Each little wile of childhood rose,
And wak'd to keener throb her woes;
Her tears deplor'd each youthful crime,
And mourn'd, that long ere manhood's prime,
He thus could change, for vice and shame,
The honors of a noble name.

This simple truth has long been known,
The ceaseless drop will wear the stone!
And soon will tears of anguish part
That soft frail frame a mother's heart:
That solemn bell along the dale,
Emma! proclaims thy mournful tale;
In beauty's full meridian glow,
What was the ill that laid thee low,
Whilst wealth and honors round thee smiled?
That last worst curse—a guilty child!

Why here should noble Harald stay
To mourn his noon of life away?
To chase the wild-deer o'er the fell,
Or share the sport in wood or dell,
No more can please his joyless breast,
Or sooth his throbbing heart to rest:
As through those well-known scenes he strays,
Sad memory turns to former days;
In thought, his long-lost boy he sees
Light springing through yon distant trees,
Wild rapture beaming in his face,
The youthful leader of the chase;
Then back returns that dreadful hour—
The burst of rage—the savage lower—

And all the pangs his bosom knew,
When mad with guilt that son withdrew;
When rests his eye upon that tower,
His still lov'd Emma's favorite bower,
The silent tears that calmly flow
Bespeak a purer softer woe;
'She sleeps in peace!'—the mourner cries,—
'No more to pain or grief to rise;
If yet thy gentle spirit share
Or mortal love, or mortal care,
Oh! deign the balm of peace to shed
Around thy faithful husband's head!
If to the dead be given the power
To rise and check the guilty hour,
Oh!—wake thy son to feel the shame
That rests upon his father's name!
Ere yet too late, his soul recall,
And shew His love, who died for all;
And point his everlasting doom,
Who unrepentant fills the tomb!
One last sad hope yet sooths this breast,
Soon in thy peaceful grave to rest.'

He hears his injur'd country's call,
Now sad and silent is the hall;

The aged steward's small faithful train
Alone to guard its walls remain ;
In Holy Land brave Harald fought,
And deeds of desperate valour wrought :
Twelve years had pass'd—'twas Christmas tide,
' Tho' hence our Lord,' old Geoffry cried,
' Once more the great hall fire shall blaze,
And, by its warm and cheerful rays,
We'll sit and drink his wish'd return,
As bright the logs and fagots burn ;'
In harmless mirth the Eve was pass'd,
Though loudly swell'd the wintry blast,
And ancient ballad, song, and tale,
Went circling with the mantling ale ;
Sudden they start, as sinks the blast,
' Sure footsteps near yon window pass'd,
Who thus, upon good Christmas night,
Are wander'd, peaceful folk to fright ?'
Cried Barbara ; ' rouse the fire, then join
In that old favorite lay of mine !'
To raise her feeble voice she tried,
But on her lips the accents died,
—' I cannot sing—our lady dear
' Lov'd it'—she dried the swelling tear ;—

Sudden with strokes the door resounds,
Up start two ancient favorite hounds;—
Half dead with terror and amaze,
The vassals on each other gaze,
Till Geoffry cries, 'Arise, for shame!
'Think on our master's honor'd name!
When was fair Nappa's bounteous door
Clos'd on the stranger or the poor?'
The doors are spread—none there are seen,
Tho' steps upon the snow have been:—
What dark close muffled form is laid
Half hid beneath the porch's shade?
—Back they recoil in wild affright,
With horror trembling at the sight!
A mangled human form, behold!
All drench'd in blood, wan, stiff, and cold!
Their eager eyes no semblance trace,
Mark'd with deep gashes was the face;
Again they view the corse all o'er,
One mortal wound the bosom bore;
Tall and well grown the form appears,
But bears no mark of length of years;
Short, thick, and curl'd, the chestnut hair
Fell o'er a brow of sun-burnt fair;

The dress was that of outlaw'd band,
And on the hard, but fine form'd hand,
Of richest work a ring was found
With two united rubies crown'd:
The dogs approach—they lick that hand,
And moaning by the body stand:
The vassals fear struck, stunn'd, aghast,
The night of horror slowly pass'd:
When dawn'd the day, new cares arose
How of the corse they should dispose!
Cover's fair abbey distant lay,
And foes in woods might wait their prey;
—Then be it laid, with holy rite,
In chapel vault ere fall of night!—
'Within that chapel's holy shade
Shall never outlaw's corse be laid,'
Calmly, yet firm, good Geoffry cries,
'Ah! there our angel lady lies!
Would ye that sacred spot profane,
With one whom murder's guilt may stain?
No!—in yon lone and dreary dell,
There stands a little ruin'd cell,
The spot is mark'd by fence around,
It may be deem'd half holy ground;

There the scath'd oak its branch may wave
Above the forest 'Outlaw's grave!'
Now, oft as twilight draws her veil,
Begins the whisper'd fearful tale;
As midnight's sable shades are spread,
Each throbbing bosom owns its dread;
And sad and anxious pass'd each day,
Till the long year had roll'd away.
At length from war, and hostile shore,
Returns their much-lov'd lord, once more,
To wake around his Christmas hearth
Its wonted hospitable mirth,
To chase the shades of woe the while,
And wear the transient long-lost smile;
Again the song, the tale arose,
And bright the cup with wassail flows;
Bright flames the fire, and groans the board
Beneath the feast of Nappa's lord;
Till the deep bell, from Cover's tower,
Proclaims the solemn midnight hour.
Good Geoffry starts—pale, wild, with dread,
'Sure 'neath the porch I hear them tread.'
'Why that wild look?'—Lord Harald cries,
But, ere th' affrighted steward replies,

Again is heard the furious fall
Of knockings loud that shake the hall!—
With horror thrill'd, the vassals stand,
Pale is each cheek, and clasped each hand;
Their lord their tardy care reproves,
He chides—but not a servant moves;
'Till a grey veteran, old in war,
Whose face was seam'd with many a scar,
With taunts the trembling group rush'd through,
And back the massive wicket drew.
Again, a shrouded form is laid
Beneath the porch's ample shade!
Wondering to see them speechless stand,
Brave Harald lends his noble hand;
An ample cloak they first unfold,
That round their burden close is roll'd;
The blazing torches nearer bring,
And, lo! the woodland's antler'd king!—
A stag of more than usual size
And dappled beauty meets their eyes!
'However sent,—a welcome guest,'
Cries Harald, 'to my Christmas feast!'
Gaily he spake, and look'd around,
But not one smile in answer found;

Geoffry stoop'd low, his face to hide,
And round the neck a scroll espied;
It told of thanks, for kindness past,
Shewn to their Chief at Christmas last;
Had they not lent their friendly aid,
He ne'er in holy ground had laid,
But might have been the midnight food
Of some wild prowler of the wood.
Outlaw'd by man, by church accurst,
They every human tie had burst;
'Till in fierce fight their leader fell,
And now they bade the dales farewell!
As parting present, left a deer
To furnish out their Christmas cheer!

'What mystery's here?'—in strange surprise,
Cried Harald, as around his eyes
He cast, when Geoffry lowly kneel'd
And the last Christmas tale reveal'd:
'Where is that ring?'—alas! when shewn,
A darker, sadder tale is known!
Those chesnut curls that once had spread
O'er his lost Oswald's graceful head,
Those faithful dogs,—who only mourn'd,
Who only knew him thus return'd,

All, all the fatal truth declare,
That outlaw'd plunderer was his heir!
That lone, rude, scarcely hallowed grave,
O'er which those blighted branches wave,
Was gained by fraud, from friends unknown,
Ungrac'd by prayer, or tear, or stone.

Ye noble train, who deign to hear
The simple Legend of the Deer;
With tender, firm, parental care,
Prune the wild plants ye hope to rear!
And early press this solemn truth,
Ne'er bless'd was disobedient youth!
He who a father's law could spurn,
And bid a mother ceaseless mourn,
In health's full glow, in manhood's pride,
Curs'd by the church, an outlaw died!

Then swept the Bard the chords along,
And wild and solemn was the song;
Now seem'd the wind the oak to wave
Above the outlaw'd Oswald's grave;
And now, in deeper measure flows
The tone that speaks a father's woes:

Then notes of softer sorrow swell,
As echoing down the moonlight dell,
Was heard fair Emma's funeral lay,
That soft in distance died away.

When ceased that sad, that melting fall,
Still silence reign'd within the hall!
Quick glanc'd his eye the cause to trace,
And joyful read, in every face,
The various feelings that arose
From Oswald's guilt, his parent's woes;
He saw the father's anxious eye,
He drank soft beauty's pitying sigh,
And mark'd with pride the look of scorn
By many a noble stripling worn,
As rose in thought the outlaw's doom;
His blasted fame, his early tomb,
His beaming eye, his glowing cheek,
His conscious throbbing heart bespeak;
Nor, when the kind applauses came,
With purer pleasure thrill'd his frame;
For 'tis the Poet's proudest part
To wake the fibres of the heart,
And read, full beaming from the eye,
The influence of his minstrelsy!

Whilst crowded round the applauding throng,
Was heard the solemn choral song,
From Cover's Friars that slowly pass, (*)
To join in holy midnight mass.
" Give me thy harp !" young Glanville cried,
And rais'd a glance that seem'd to chide,
" I'll bear it to requite thy care,
And lesson given to Nappa's heir ;"
His hand the Minstrel smiling press'd,
And, with an eye that prais'd and bless'd,
Regarded fond the graceful youth,
Thus mindful of the voice of truth :
With all a parent's transport warm,
He seized that kind supporting arm.
Whilst honoring thus thy Minstrel's age—
My harp—resign it to the page—
Thou ne'er canst wound thy father's heart,
Or from pure honor's path depart !
Flash the bright visions o'er my mind
Of future scenes for thee design'd ;
Forth from these towers I see thee ride,
Thy kinsmen's Lord, fair Wensley's pride ;
With knightly bearing, warrior's grace,
The honor of thy noble race !

Now, from the turret's lofty round,
Is heard the bell's deep lengthen'd sound;
And slow the gay procession pass,
To aid the solemn Christmas mass.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

HIGH was the feast of Christmas day,
The banquet rich, the evening gay;
Not deck'd alone the lofty board,
Where sat the guests of Nappa's Lord;
But every table full was spread,
And every vassal freely fed;
And whilst the cup with spices crown'd
Circled the higher board around,
Bright mantling horns of foaming ale,
And jocund mirth, and merry tale,
To the low herdsman's simple heart,
More full, more genuine joys impart.
As drains his Lord the gilded bowl,
Oft pride or sorrow wrings his soul;
The luscious banquet does he share?
'Tis poison'd by the dregs of care!—

But when the vassal joins the feast,
The throbbing tenant of his breast
Bounds with quick pulse, light, gay and free,
Regardless of futurity!
Would ye the varying causes know,
From which such different feelings flow?
Learn, that to crown with joy each hour,
Was never given to mortal power!
Ah! deem not life an idle toy,
But nobly wealth and power employ;
Firmly pursue some generous plan,
To aid the real good of man;
Or bravely join your country's cause,
Defend her rights, maintain her laws;
Relaxing from such glorious toil,
When pleasure wears her virtuous smile,
Bright glowing in your conscious breast
You then shall feel the joy of rest!

Mid the wide chimney's flames display'd
The mystic log is duly laid; (4)
And, hark! with squeaking fife and drum,
A merry band of mummers come; (5)
Their caps with wreaths and feathers crown'd,
Their sleeves with knots of ribbon bound,

Now springing light, now moving slow,
As high their gleaming brands they throw,
Some ancient tale their Morris tells,
And cheerful sound their tinkling bells:
All crowd around with loud applause,
Then back some blushing maiden draws;
Why does her cheek such blush disclose,
The vernal rose mid wintry snows?
See, from the lofty roof display'd,
The mistletoe's mysterious shade:
Happy the youth, whose favorite fair
Is doom'd that magic shade to share!
Though proud or low his station be,
The kiss of love that night is free:
Such was the fine, in ancient day
The daughter of the lord must pay
To the low herdsman, if its shade
At once upon their foreheads play'd.

The Morris o'er and frolic's play,
Now swells the Christmas carol gay;
In manly tones, bold, rough, and free,
Now bursts the rustic minstrelsy;
The lofty roof the notes prolong,
And startled echoes catch the song;

Now to the harp's soft mellow play
Is join'd the fair one's sweeter lay;
Their richer holier strain is given
In sounds of gratitude to Heaven;
And now, as harp and voices rise
Full swelling to the midnight skies,
Is heard the strain, that tells His love,
Who left his glorious throne above,
The erring race of man to save—
To rise victorious o'er the grave;
Conqueror of sin! Almighty King!
To Him the solemn lay they sing,
And joyful hail this sacred hour,
When laid aside his might and power,
As pure she smil'd in virgin charms,
He bless'd his sainted mother's arms:
In solemn silence dies the lay
And end the rites of Christmas day.

SECOND DAY.

Now dawn'd the morn's faint yellow glow,
Yet plain and mountain, wreath'd with snow,
Close hid beneath a misty veil,
Spread one wide blank—dim, cold, and pale;
No sound of cheerful life is heard,
No ploughman's song to note of bird;
The mountain stream that rushes by,
The river's flow, the wild wind's sigh,
Or the full torrent's roar profound,
Alone awake the echoes round.
When half his course was well nigh run,
Through cloud and vapour broke the sun,
And throwing wide his misty veil,
Shew'd the wild beauties of the dale;

The plain is spread with fleecy snow,
And fair as light the mountains glow,
Up the dark rocks, in graceful twine,
Fantastic snow-wreaths glimmering shine,
And in the sun's bright noon-tide rays,
Sparkling with gems, the woodlands blaze.
Each lofty oak spread wide around,
Each slender heath-stem on the ground,
Ivy's dark leaf and pallid flower
Stand crystall'd by the icy shower;
From the high eaves of Nappa's hall,
In lengthen'd spikes, the ice drops fall;
And joying in the transient ray,
The red-breast tunes his simple lay;
Bright but short-liv'd the dazzling glow
Of Christmas sun on fields of snow!
Frail as the joys, that courts impart
To the sad mourner's grief chill'd heart;
One moment past, the smile is fled,
And evening's clouds full quickly spread!

And now again is Nappa's hearth
The scene of hospitable mirth;
What shall the lengthen'd eve beguile,
Or sportive dance,—or playful wile?

Where Aldbro' rears his mountain crest,
And the lone lake expands her breast, (*)
The youthful skaters, bold and gay,
Had pass'd the wintry morn away;
As now their sportive labours close,
Each weary limb requires repose:
And see, a lovely female band
Soft smiling round Lord Trinian stand,
And ask a boon!—the harp to hear,
Tun'd to some tale to beauty dear!
Not the fierce notes of war's alarms,
Of outlaw wild, of feats of arms,—
But such, as to the female eye
May call the tear of sympathy.
Such boon was never sought, in vain,
From knight or bard of gentle strain.

Is that a form of mortal race,
With cherub smile, aërial grace,
Beside yon lofty harp that stands
And wakes the strings with timid hands;
Whose auburn locks, bright waving flow
Around her brow of living snow;
To whose mild beaming eye is given
The azure tint of summer's heaven?

And who is he—that graceful boy,
Whose glowing cheek and laughing eye
Spirit and wit and mirth pervade,
—Through the dark ringlets playful shade;—
Like sun-beam on the warrior's crest,
Or boldest eaglet of the nest?
—'Tis Scroope of Bolton's rose-bud fair!
That noble youth is Nappa's heir!
Close to the reverend Bard they stand,
She tries the strings,—he chafes his hand,
And leaning half against his knee,
Looks up with smile of fondling glee,
As whispering soft her honor'd friend,
The lovely maid is seen to bend;
The curls that o'er her temples play
Fall on the Bard's of silver grey;
A contrast sweet their tresses shew,
Autumn's rich leaf on winter's snow;
And such the ties their hearts that bind,
Bounty's rich fruit on age's mind.
'Tis sweetly tun'd!—the fair one cries,
Touch'd by that hand,—the Bard replies,
Its notes must soft and freely flow,
Meet for a strain of love and woe;

For the wild tale from Mona's isle (7)
I seek not Beauty's melting smile,
When moans the harp upon the ear
How soothing falls soft Pity's tear!

THE

BRIDAL OF BERTHA;

A

Legend of Mona.

PART I.

ROUND Mona's isle the billows sleep,
And sparkles bright the dancing spray,
As each wild rock and craggy steep
Is silver'd by the moon's soft ray.

Light floats the sea-gull on the tide,
The wearied fisher sinks to rest;
And not a cloud is seen to glide
Reflected on the Ocean's breast.

But o'er the skies so calm, so fair,
What sounds of melting music flow,
That rising o'er the midnight air
Pours the soft notes of love and woe!

No mortal voice such notes can raise,
As float along these midnight skies,
Whose sounds the Ocean's breath obeys,
And hush'd beneath its influence dies.

Now sailing round yon lofty tower,
Is heard the sweet the solemn strain;
It swells o'er beauteous Bertha's bower,
Then dies in murmurs o'er the main.

Can Minstrel's harp those notes repeat,
Or Bard in loftiest numbers tell
What was that song, so strange, so sweet,
That breath'd that wild that sad farewell?

To Minstrel's harp it ne'er was given,
To pour a pure celestial strain!
To catch the song that flows from Heaven
Must loftiest Bard essay in vain!

Then thou! the lowest of that race,
The vain the fond attempt forego!
Contented, through life's vale, to trace
The varying scenes of bliss and woe.

Now rose the morn, and o'er the tide
Is spread the bright the smiling ray,
And swift the bark is seen to glide,
That bears the Lord of Colonsay.

The breezes swell the snowy sail,
And foams the wave around the oar,
The lover chides the languid gale,
And anxious views the distant shore.

High swells the heart with love, with pride;
United, can those passions reign?
Ah! there is seen his beauteous bride,
And round is spread her wide domain.

Those lofty towers that on the steep
Frown o'er the subject plain below;
And half surrounded by the deep,
Defy the bravest fiercest foe;

The wealth which Lordly Osmond owns,
His honors, heroes' dearer care,
Derived from Danish, Scottish thrones,
Must bless his lovely only heir.

But who that on that heir had gaz'd,
Had deem'd that wealth increas'd her charms,
Or had not heaven enraptur'd prais'd,
Although she dowerless bless'd his arms?

Pure as the breeze that o'er the wave
Untainted sweeps on airy wing,
Calm as the honor of the brave,
And sweeter than the flower of spring.

Could youthful beauty, softest grace,—
All heaven with bounteous hands bestows,
To form the mind, or deck the face,
Secure the heart from mortal woes—

Then, Bertha!—had thy spotless breast
Remain'd undew'd by sorrow's tear;
Nor now, in bridal splendour drest,
Hadst thou implor'd the sable bier.

Thy father's vassal was the youth,
Who thus could every chief excel;
Soft spake the voice of love and truth—
Where did that vassal's parents dwell?

Or if, as rumour whispering told,
A captive from a distant isle:
Why did not prayer, or powerful gold,
Restore him to a parent's smile?

In the low twig upon the ground,
Only the future thorn we see;
But when a sapling oak is found,
In the slight stem we trace the tree.

Thus, when the generous youth appears,
In the fine form, the speaking face,
The mind that soars beyond his years,
The noble father we may trace!

Yet o'er the reverend Osmond's fame
Had ne'er suspicion cast her veil,
He knew not Edgar's infant name,
And simple seem'd the orphan's tale.

'Twas in December's darkest night,
When clouds and tempests heaven deform,
That sternly frowning in his might
Up sprung the demon of the storm.

Then rose the Ocean's wildest wave,
The furious whirlwind's angry swell;
And o'er the seaman's destin'd grave,
Was heard the boding Dolkin's yell! (*)

Still anxious suffering man to aid,
Earl Osmond bade the warning light,
On Rushen's lofty tower display'd,
To guide the wanderer through the night.

The pealing thunders rend the skies,
Quick flashing through the shade profound,
The blue fork'd lightning gleaming flies,
And shews the dreadful scene around.

Can yon small bark the storm sustain
That rises o'er the heaving wave?—
Alas!—the Seaman's art is vain,
She sinks!—they find a watery grave!

Now slowly rising in the east,
Appears the morn faint cold and pale;
And where the Ocean's swell has ceas'd,
Behold a wave-drench'd sable veil!

And wrapp'd within its guardian fold
A beauteous infant Boy is laid,
Who steep'd in wet, and numb'd by cold,
With feeble cries implor'd for aid.

The pitying Earl received the child,
And, as he trac'd his faded charms,
The infant quick reviving smil'd,
And fondly sought his sheltering arms.

Not yet had Osmond's bosom known
Those long-wish'd joys which parents share,
He clasp'd the waves' gift as his own,
And rear'd with all a Father's care.

And well was noble Osmond's love
By Edgar's grateful heart repaid;
In every act he proudly strove
His Patron's power and fame to aid.

And when the fierce invading Dane
Had landed on fair Mona's shore,
None on the battle's bloody plain,
A nobler part than Edgar bore.

When on the reeking ground, o'erthrown
By giant force, brave Osmond fell;
When seem'd to rise his parting groan,
And foemen rais'd their savage yell,

His guardian shield before the chief
With ready arm young Edgar threw,—
Check'd the wild triumph, fierce as brief,
And Denmark's giant champion slew.

Or when, within the festive hall,
Was spread the feast of Glory's day;
None lighter bounded through the ball,
None pour'd a loftier sweeter lay.

Within the mountain's deepest glade,
Behold the beauteous woodbine rise,
Whilst towering o'er the subject shade
The forest's monarch braves the skies;

By Nature taught, the woodland king
Will spread his arms to form her bower,
And round his guardian trunk will cling
In graceful wreaths the fragile flower.

Ah! say, could Edgar Bertha view
And not his inmost heart resign?
Bertha! to all his virtues true,
Cold was that spotless breast of thine?

Untold their love, they lov'd the more,
For why should lips the tale disclose
His every glance impassion'd bore,
And o'er her cheek in blushes rose!

Osmond! ill-fated was the hour,
When by ambition led astray,
And blinded by the lust of power
Thy word was pledg'd to Colonsay!

When first the fatal tale was told
How pale became thy Bertha's cheek!
She clasp'd thy hand with quivering hold,
She sought thine eye,—but could not speak!

Ah !—couldst thou view the hapless maid,
And yet the stern command repeat?
—See those clasp'd hands implore thine aid,
Nor yielding raise her from thy feet?

And couldst thou doom that noble youth,
To all an Exile's woe and shame?
And scorn the plea of love and truth,
The life he sav'd, his orphan claim?

THE

BRIDAL OF BERTHA;

A

Legend of Mona.

PART II.

WHERE Ocean's wildest billows break
  Oe'r rugged shelves with ceaseless roar,
And rising high in many a peak
  The rocky cliffs o'erhang the shore;

Where mountains brown with heath o'erspread,
  Scarce boast a dark pine on their side,
Where not a wild rose waves its head,
  Or murmuring brook is seen to glide;

Where ne'er is heard the matin song,
From early lark to hail the beam,
But winds, that moan those rocks along,
Or the wild sea-bird's savage scream:

There, frowning o'er the rocky steep,
And Lord of many a neighbouring isle,
That gems the bosom of the deep,
Stands Colonsay's rude massive pile. (*)

Though ages o'er those towers had pass'd,
Since first their lofty heads they rear'd;
Still scorning the wild northern blast,
Firm as their base they yet appear'd.

But 'though unmov'd by human fate,
For years had stood the castle's pride;
The Lord who there held rule and state
Had felt the turn of fortune's tide.

In youth no Chieftain's plume he wore,
No Noble's rank, no Baron's fame;
Tho' true a noble name he bore
A distant kinsman's scarce own'd claim.

Tho' proud and fierce was Hubert's mien,
Yet in that dark,—that deep set eye
Might workings keen and dread be seen,
That spake of hovering danger nigh.

When seated round the hearth at night,
Strange tales would whispering vassal's tell,—
Then sudden pause to watch the light,
Or list the breeze that swept the fell.

'Twas true, they said, that in the rage
Of fiercest battle Donald died;
But where—those treasures of his age—
His only Boy—his beauteous Bride?

Then would the oldest veteran stand,
Grasping his staff and sad declare,
That though he rul'd with haughty hand,
Hubert was not brave Donald's heir.

Was but his youthful Lord restor'd
To bless once more his drooping age!
Once more that hand should grasp the sword,
And in one last bold act engage!

Then would he pause—look wild around—
Low muttering of the midnight storm—
Of lights that gleam—of music's sound—
And of a gliding Phantom's form.

Though thus through many a vassal's breast,
Was whisper'd doubts that fears must veil;
Yet ne'er had distant rumour press'd
On Osmond's ear the fearful tale.

When perish'd noble Donald's name,
He fought upon a foreign shore;
When home return'd, he heard from fame
Hubert his kinsman's honors bore.

Else rather than have pledg'd his child,
To one whose honor knew a stain,
He would on humblest love have smiled,
And scorn'd Ambition's art wove chain.

Ah!—when he seal'd that daughter's doom,
Regardless of her prayers and tears;
He little knew what eve of gloom
He closed around his latest years.

Now bright reflected from the main
Was seen the Sun's full glowing beam;
And gay advancing o'er the plain,
A hundred waving banners gleam.

And clad in various forms of dress,
The Chieftains from each neighbouring isle
With duteous zeal all eager press,
To Rushen's lofty lordly pile.

Light waves the plaid in graceful fold,
Whilst glittering arms reflect the ray;
And o'er the helmets, rich with gold,
The lofty plumes light varying play.

Now brightly flashes Hubert's eye,
As his proud glance he casts around;
And now he checks the swelling sigh,
As low'rs his eye that seeks the ground.

Who in that varying look can trace
The Lover's hope, or Bridegroom's joy?
The wild expression of that face
Shews deep fixt pangs that breast annoy!

Loud swells the pibroch on the ear,
Mixt with the pipe as flits the gale:
Whilst pitying maidens drop the tear,
And eye the Bride so sad, so pale.

Though richly deck'd with gems, with gold,
With all that pride or wealth bestows,
Say, if beneath its graceful fold,
With peace or hope that bosom glows!

No!—hopeless love, disgust and fear,
By turns that throbbing breast divide!
Now swells the full, the scarce-check'd tear,
Then one sad hope restrains its tide.

What is the hope that still has power
To yield one ray so wild so vain?—
She heard those notes at midnight hour,
The boding music of the main!

But, ah! those hopes full quick decay
As reaching now the holy pile
The gay procession wind away
Where opens wide the Gothic aisle.

The organ joins its lofty tone, (n)
With holy lay by quires begun;
And o'er the scene rich light is thrown,
As storied windows catch the sun.

Around the lofty Altar's height
Falls the rich curtain's graceful fold;
Whilst numerous tapers blazing bright
The dazzled eye can scarce behold.

And there, in snowy robes array'd
The holy reverend Abbot stands;
He turns,—he hails the Chief—the Maid,
He takes—then moves to join their hands.

THE

BRIDAL OF BERTHA;

A

Legend of Mona.

PART III.

WHY does th' attendant train give place?
Why o'er each face such paleness spread?—
What strangers move with solemn pace?
What notes of sorrow mourn the dead?

What the strange burthen sad they bear
Oe'r which is cast that sable veil?
At once—that sable veil they rear—
In silence tell the mournful tale!

Can that be Edgar's graceful form,
Dead,—pale as dripping from the wave?
He comes—the victim of the storm,
To claim a last sad gift—the grave!

Wild horror stiffens Hubert's brow,
"Donald is that thy heir?"—he cried;
"Where has he liv'd conceal'd till now
Tell me—quick tell me where he died!

"Where is the beauteous Isabel?
Where was she hid, when me she fled?
Oh!—if she live,—all yet is well—
Is she too numbered with the dead?"

He speaks—but not a voice replies,
He casts his frantic glance around—
And sees, where stands with tearful eyes
Earl Osmond, pierced with grief profound.

A statue by that sable bier,
The lovely, hapless Bertha stands!
No sigh she breathes,—she sheds no tear,
Fixt is her look—and clasp'd her hands!

Sudden a wild a rapturous smile
Lightens her cheeks' aërial glow;
She clasps the clay-cold hand the while,
And strains it to her breast of snow.

"That music on the midnight air
Was Bertha's bridal lay"—she cried;
"One deep cold peaceful grave prepare!—
—There join the Bridegroom and the Bride!"

The sorrowing Father raised his Child
The storm of fear—of woe—was past
She clasped his hand—she fondly smiled—
Breath'd one faint sigh—of Life the last!

Is this the end of pomp and power!
Is this the joyful bridal day!
For this was deck'd the nuptial bower,
And tun'd the Minstrel's sweetest lay!

Here, deck'd with every fragrant flower,
Bedew'd by many a friendly tear,
The lovers share that splendid bower—
Their nuptial couch—the silent bier!

With bursts of grief and heartfelt sighs
The hapless father mourns his heir;
The darling of his heart and eyes,
His morning's joy—his evening's prayer!

And as the late scorn'd youth he views,
Sad memory paints his orphan charms;
And that fond tender tie renews,
As when he sought his sheltering arms.

But where is Hubert?—that fell blight
Which laid these beauteous blossoms low?
Ah!—see where yon pale taper's light
Just serves the solemn scene to shew!

And, lowly at the altar's base,
In Pilgrim's weed behold him kneel!—
As drops of anguish dew his face—
His late repented crimes reveal!

"My sire was one, whose rugged breast
Nor love, nor gentle pity knew;
In every scene, one thought still press'd—
Still to one fatal purpose true.

" To gain a chieftain's high command,
Or rule with all a baron's power;
For this he fought with savage hand,
For that he plann'd in secret hour.

" The youngest of a noble race,
He mark'd each change with anxious eyes;
Still mov'd with wily cautious pace,
By fraud or force to gain the prize.

" He mark'd my youthful opening mind,
And every generous thought repress'd;
Ah!—there was one he could not bind,
That reign'd the sovereign of my breast!

" I saw the blooming Isabel,
The Lord of Kilda's only child!
My heart confess'd love's powerful spell,—
Her father's wealth my sire beguil'd.

" But we were scorn'd, and she was given
In all her blooming opening charms,
The richest—fairest gift of Heaven,
To bless brave Donald's aged arms.

" Thus o'er ambition's anxious care
And love's sweet hope, a blight then fell;
My father was Lord Donald's heir,
My soul ador'd fair Isabel!

" Abbot! thou knows't 'tis truly said
In battle-field brave Donald died;
My father lay beside him dead,
When clansmen stemm'd the battle's tide.

" My sire's strong hand still grasp'd the sword
That deep was dyed with crimson stains;
Oh!—dare I breathe the dreadful word?—
That blood once filled Lord Donald's veins!

" 'Twas not my crime—the deed I scorn—
But yet I deign'd the fruit to share;
A lovely long-wish'd heir was born,
And bloom'd beneath his mother's care.

" To gain that mother as my bride,
At once in love and wealth to reign,
More distant thoughts to check I tried,
But unsubdued they rose again.

" Far distant was young Donald's claim,
As yet, a tender opening flower:
I stood the next, in right and name,
And, if he died—mine was the power.

" Ye, who have known the dreadful hour,
When love and rage the heart divide!
Say—say can words describe the power—
The pangs to madness near allied?

" Scorning my vows, fair Isabel
Had fled by night and rais'd the sail,
To Mona's friendly chief to tell
My guilty love—her Lord's sad tale!

" Sweet victim! ruthless was the storm
That on thy 'fenceless beauties fell!
Ah!—did rough Ocean shroud thy form—
The sea-bird scream thy funeral knell?

" And thou! the latest of thy line,
Once rescued from a watery grave!
I feel—I feel the guilt was mine,
That once more doom'd thee to the wave!

" Tho' true this hand was never stain'd
With kindred blood,—yet still this heart,
With rage—with passion unrestrain'd
Oft at the thought would wildly start.

" And be this solemn truth impress'd
By holy priest, and reverend sage!
The passions of the youthful breast
Or bless or blast man's latest age.

" Now wealth and rank,—all, all are mine,
To these I bid a last farewell;
Can gold for lowly pilgrim shine,
Or titles grace the hermit's cell?

" Raise the rich tomb, and let the sound
Of holy Requiem fill the gale!
And to the wondering isles around
Proclaim this Bridal's mournful tale!

" And when is pass'd each year's slow round
Still raise the sweet, the solemn strain!
—Vain hope to catch th' aërial sound—
The waning music of the main!"

Here ceas'd the Bard—the mournful lay
At once in silence sunk away ;—
He felt the weakness of his art—
He knew it was no Minstrel's part,
Nor strove to catch that wond'rous strain
By spirits breath'd along the main,
That still is heard round Mona's shore
To bode that love and life are o'er.
Against his harp his head reclin'd
And solemn musings fill'd his mind ;
And, save for sigh and tears that fall,
Sad silence spread her veil o'er all ;
When from the harp spontaneous rose
A solemn wild and wond'rous close ;—
More full that chord—more deep that thrill,
Then e'er was wak'd by mortal skill,
O'er untouch'd strings those rich notes fly
And soft in melting murmurs die !

Close clasp'd was many a flowing veil,
And many a lovely cheek grew pale ;
And manhood's startled look reveal'd
The sudden fear which pride conceal'd :
The Minstrel rais'd his reverend head,
As, in deep solemn voice, he said,

'Twas but the wintry breezes' sigh
That wak'd those chords swift rushing by;
But when full swells the feeling breast
How deep is fancy's stamp impress'd!
Then cautious be each gifted Bard,
The honor of his art to guard!
Shall the rich boon, by Heaven assign'd
To raise—refine—instruct mankind—
The Poet's sweet and lofty strain—
Be sold to purpose base and vain?
—To kindle pride,—to flatter power
To melt in guilty pleasure's bower?
Or—deeper crime!—can such be found?
The unsuspecting heart to wound?
To lead the listening ear astray,
And point a hopeless, destin'd way?
—Strip of each milder power his God,
And leave Him but his frown and rod—
Or point to passion, guilt or gloom,
The lasting slumbers of the tomb?

Long yet conceal'd from mortal eyes,
Sad visions in my soul arise;
Another land, in later time,
Drunken with pleasure, steep'd in crime,

Shall hail the strain that bids depart
Each heaven-born virtue from the heart!
—The frantic crowd the Throne o'erturns,
The blood-streams flow, the temple burns,
Beauty and Infancy and Age,
Unpitied glut fell slaughter's rage,
'Till raises a portentous shade,
In more than human might array'd,—
Embodied pride,—awhile set free,
To fill th' Almighty's just decree,
That chasten'd nations, 'neath the rod,
Might rue their guilt, and own their God!
—But not to thee,—all thanks to Heaven!
My Country!—be such madness given!
Thou seated on thy sea-girt throne,
Shalt rest majestic and alone!
Thine be the glory, thine the pride,
To stem wide Ruin's sweeping tide;
Till every nation own thy power
And swell the triumphs of that hour
When every Land resounds the strain,
That hails thee 'Mistress of the Main!'
And to thy title adds one more,
'The Guardian friend of every shore!'

Then, O my Country!—then beware,
That in thy bosom lurk no snare!
Thy Oak oft braves the wintry storm,
Yet prostrate falls beneath the worm:
And oft has luxury, pride, and wealth,
Destroy'd a nation's strength and health;
And blush, poetic Genius!—thou
Hast torn the laurel from thy brow,
To wear the soft voluptuous wreath
Entwined by vice, deceit, and death!
—Hast lent thy voice, thy magic skill,
To work a nation's deadliest ill!
And deep recorded left thy crime,
A lasting curse to latest time!
Oh!—ne'er in Bard of British race
Be found such crime—such deep disgrace!
No, tune her rich—her native lyre,
To wake the Patriot's soul of fire!
Proclaim their triumph,—deck their grave,
Who fought their Country's rights to save!
Or to the soft and melting string,
Each dear domestic pleasure sing!
Let the rich strain to Heaven arise,
A grateful, holy sacrifice!

Land of the brave! land of the free!
With deep prophetic glance I see
Thy glories spread, thy power confess'd,
But Time's deep shade conceals the rest,
And fading from my mental sight,
The awful vision sinks in night!

As the prophetic spirit came, ([11])
More lofty rose the Minstrel's frame;
Back from his brow his white locks flow,
And the high open forehead show;
O'er his pale cheek rich roses fly,
And more than youth illumes his eye;
Whilst in deep tones that thrill the soul
His sweet majestic numbers roll:
But as he clos'd the awful strain
The weight of years return'd again;
Exhausted, faint, and pale, he bow'd,
Then round the astonish'd audience crowd,
With praise and thanks his heart recall,
And kindly bear him from the hall.

THIRD DAY.

CLEAR, cold, and bright, the morn arose,
O'r frozen hills and mountain snows;
The hunter's cheering horn is still,
No fisher seeks the ice-edg'd rill;
But still does man his pleasure find,
In waging war 'gainst feathery kind;
The sprays in Bolton woods are rent,
By well-aim'd shots from cross-bows sent;
The slaughter'd pheasant beats the ground
And spreads his shining plumage round;
Nor can that wild and mountain scene,
The lonely grouse from danger skreen;
White as the snow on which she lies,
The ptarmagan short fluttering dies;
The woodcock falls amongst his reeds,
The partridge, snipe, or black game bleeds;

The wild deer quits the rustling brake,
And from the borders of the lake
With startling scream the heron flies,
And cleaves with wide spread wings the skies;
Gay laughter, shout, and frolic play
Soon speed the winter morn away.

That night, in Nappa's lofty hall
Was held the lively social ball;
Light was the scene, and loud the mirth,
And bright the fagot on the hearth;
Of morning feats some proudly tell,
Some boast their frolics in the dell,
And some apart, with melting eye,
Breathe the soft tale and heave the sigh,
Till listening Beauty's heart o'erflows,
And heightens on her cheek the rose;
Whilst graceful dance, and lively song,
Speed quick the festive night along;
The sumptuous banquet then is spread,
And to her place each fair one led;
The feast now past, blest is each bower,
And silence reigns round Nappa's tower.

FOURTH DAY.

DARK with thick clouds and drizzly rain,
No sunbeams break o'er hill and plain;
As melts the ice along their side,
With sluggish moan the waters glide;
Fringing the mountain's rugged brow,
Still gleam some spots of scatter'd snow;
The constant dripping from the eaves,
The weary listening ear deceives:
No day is this for mirth to roam,
Such are the hours, when peaceful home—
The blazing hearth—and long-lov'd smile—
Can every wandering wish beguile.
When, scarce seen, set the wintry sun,
The rushing blast and storm begun,
Mixt with the wild and frequent shower,
Through Nappa's shades their rage to pour;

And shunning frolic or repose,
Around the hearth the inmates close:
The harp is brought by duteous page,
Glanville conducts the Minstrel sage,
And beauteous Blanch with smiling eye
Rewards th enraptur'd noble boy;
With care arrang'd, the strings are tried,
"Now pour their deepest tones!" he cried,—
"'Tis mine to choose—I'll have a tale
Dark as the night, wild as the gale;
Bid magic rites and spectres rise,
And phantoms sail along the skies!
A Christmas tale thou oft hast told,
Whilst little Blanch and Alice old,
And thou and I have past the time,
When my sire fought in foreign clime.
Still dear I prize those ancient lays
That waft me back to earliest days,
And to this aged heart restore
Thoughts, scenes, and hopes for ever o'er,"
The Bard replied;—then o'er the strings,
A wild impetuous descant flings;
As through the hall the last notes rung,
Borwick's dark mystic lay he sung.

THE EXORCISM;

THE

Legend of Borwick.

SPREAD the shades of night around,
Thunder shakes the rocking dome;
Loud the furious whirlwinds sound,
Lightning's fires the sky illume;
Deep within the forest's gloom
Stands the antique moated pile,
Round is scatter'd many a tomb,
Broken arch, and gothic aisle:
In those chambers dank and drear,
When the shades of night are spread;
Sounds unearthly meet the ear,
Rise the phantoms of the dead;

In the last, the stateliest hall,
See his wand th' Exorcist wave!
Here, ere morn, his rites shall call
The restless tenant of the grave:
His sable robes spread o'er the ground,
Wild his eyes with horror glare,
Though by magic fillets bound,
Stands erect his silver hair;
Round his form in wondrous fold,
See the serpent girdle twin'd!
Mark'd with signs inwrought with gold,
Falls the ermin'd hood behind!
There the lofty Altar stands,
Trac'd with mystic sculpture o'er.
Awful rites of various lands,
Gothic, Pagan, Druid, lore!
On the Altar glows a fire
What its wondrous fuel tell?
Never, never, that inquire,
Leave the horrors of that spell!
Round is spread a ring of fire,
Higher now its flames aspire!
Flash the lurid lightnings round!
Deeper rolls the thunder's sound!

Louder swells the midnight storm!
Loftier towers the Exorcist's form!
As in accents deep and dread,
He breathes the spell that wakes the dead!

Wandering Spirit! hear the call!
Spirit, fled from mortal clay,
Tread once more this earthly ball!
Rise, my dread commands obey!
Whatsoe'er thy secret sins,
What thy crimes, thy wrongs, thy woes,
When the last dread rite begins,
Rise, their mysteries to disclose!

He waves the wand—the storm is past,
Dies the thunder—hush'd the blast;
Deeper, deader glows the fire,
Now in smoke its flames expire;
Dense and chill the vapours spread,
As from the mansions of the dead,
Rises slow a pale blue light,
Dimly swelling on the sight,
Whilst gleaming through the dreadful shade,
—What awful spectre stands display'd?

A form of more than mortal height,
Clad in armour meets the sight;
On the proud helm, the sable plume
Waves, and spreads a deeper gloom!
Over the lofty brow—but there—
Is written guilt and fixt despair;—
Whilst, pale and livid in the face,
The characters of death give place
To that dread life, which spirits share
Condemn'd to roam the midnight air,
Or haunt the spot, where rapine foul,
Or lust, or murder stain'd the soul!
One hand a gleaming dagger fills,
As from its point the blood distils,
The other shows where, on the floor,
Appears the marks of long shed gore;
The lengthen'd groan, in part suppress'd,
Seems now to rend the tortur'd breast,
From moveless lips these accents part
And show the guilt that stain'd the heart
That bade the grave deny its rest,
And clos'd the mansions of the blest.

Mine was the lot, in mortal life
To dwell 'mid scenes of feudal strife—

A Baron's splendid pennon wave—
And shine the bravest of the brave:
Alike in battle, and in broil,
I shar'd the warrior's hardy toil;
In tournament, as field, renown'd,
I gave—but never felt a wound;
In courtly hall, and festive bower,
Mine was the gay, the envied power
To charm the lovely blooming fair,
And all the monarch's counsels share.
These halls were mine,—that lofty board
Has oft beheld me, sovereign Lord,
Share the high revel, gay and free,
Whilst humble vassals bent the knee,
And Minstrels loudly sung my fame,
And gave to distant lands my name:
Then through these courts, now wild and waste,
Full oft with martial splendour grac'd,
I led my hapless vassal train
To bleed in quarrel fierce and vain:
But though my flattery's tongue caress'd,
No faithful hearts 'twas mine to share;
How could they love—by power oppress'd,
A tyrant's rod,—not father's care?

Oft too they mourn'd a ruin'd child
Seduc'd to guilty pleasure's bower,
—What village maiden had not smiled,
Woo'd by a chief so high in power?—
Yes!—there was one!—the opening rose
That gives its fragrance to the gale
Could not a purer breast disclose,
And to her blooming cheek were pale;
There, hid within a lonely cot,
In calm seclusion dwelt the maid,
Contented with her humble lot.—
The beauteous blossom of the shade;
An orphan niece from exile brought,
Whilst yet an artless babe she smil'd;
Such was the tale her guardian taught,
Such tale our simple hinds beguil'd;
But he, who mark'd fair Ellen's eye,
Had read a nobler nature there,
And in that brow, so calm, so high,
That inborn grace,—that lofty air,—
Oh!—days of guilt and horror past!
Must I your dreadful secret tell?
Not by seduction's baleful blast,
But by yet blacker guilt she fell!

When once o'erpast the verge of ill,
Will haughty man his steps retrace?
Ah, no!—he plunges deeper still,
To hide his crime and foul disgrace:
E'en in the hour of frantic grief
And keen reproach, the fair confess'd
Herself the daughter of a chief,
Once by my savage power oppress'd;
In distant land he long had fought
When from his native home he fled,
And thence, to me the tale was brought
That he in valour's field was dead:
But now enrich'd by fame and power,
He came his ancient halls to claim,
To give his child a splendid dower,
And bless her with a father's name:
Behold that deep—that gory stain?
'Twas there that injur'd father died!
Ah!—knew he but of guilt the pain,
How soon would man restrain his pride!
Oh!—Ellen, did this guilty hand
Pierce thy pure breast?—and must I tell—
To veil my guilt—to hold his land—
That here the father—daughter—fell?

Had virtuous love e'er fill'd my breast—
Had I restrain'd the rage of power—
I might have liv'd—belov'd and blest,
And happy been my final hour!
But now what horrors round me dwell,
The grave to sin can yield no peace,
My guilt is known—withdraw the spell,
Then shall my earthly wanderings cease!
But seek not thou to trace the soul,
When to immortal realms it flies;
Let this dread truth from guilt control—
'Tis bliss or woe—it never dies!

Slowly from the Exorcist's eyes,
Wrapp'd in thick mists, the spectre flies!
Again the altar's flames aspire,
And deeply glows the ring of fire;
Now blazing fiercely from the floor,
It draws the marks of long-shed gore;
Then slowly, as the flame decays,
Through windows high, the soften'd rays
Of silver moonlight gleam and show,
As ether light, but pale as snow,
A female form;—so pure and bright
She shines, amid the shades of night,

That, thrill'd with awe,—the Exorcist stands
And drops the spell-wand from his hands;
Whilst, pointing to a reverend shade,
In holy Palmer's garb array'd
She whispers soft;—'Thy arts now cease!
To us is given pure joy and peace—
And of the guilty seek no more!'
—It fades!—the magic scene is o'er!

Fresh is the air, and pure the sky,
And through the ruins night-winds sigh;
With deeper murmur rolls the flood,
More lonely seems the solemn wood,
And swift the Exorcist seeks his cell,
The wonders of that night to tell.

Here ceas'd the Bard his wondrous song,
Then pour'd the deep-ton'd chords along
A strain so solemn, strange and slow,
That, as its notes, wild varying flow,
Its magic sounds through every ear
Instil a sense of pleasing fear,

" Change—change thy notes !"—Lord Trinian cried,
" For be it granted, or denied,
Full true it is nor youth nor fair
This night will peaceful slumber share,
Unless an hour of lightsome play
Chase these wild magic spells away.
Come tune thy harp to lively air !—
And join the song ye brave and fair !"—
Gaily he spake,—and smil'd to see
How quickly lighted up with glee
Appear'd at once each youthful face,
As round the hall, with measur'd pace,
In graceful ancient dance they glide
And raise the song of Christmas-tide.

FIFTH DAY.

Morn scarce brings light, for heavy shower
Or driving hail unceasing pour,
The lingering breakfast pass'd away,
What shall beguile the tedious day?
Retired apart, the Nobles sage
At Table games intent engage,
Whilst ancient Dames, the fire beside,
The needle or the distaff plied,
Or talk'd of times long past and gone,
When such wild days were never known.
In the great hall the youthful race
The Galliard's mazy figure trace;
Half hid, some by the casements stand,
Scarce notic'd by the sportive band,
To watch the drops that never fail,
—Perchance to breathe a softer tale;
Whilst, to the virginals sweet string,
A madrigal some gaily sing:

And loitering pages at the door,
With curious eyes the scene explore;
And serving Damsels stop, whene'er
They find excuse, the sight to share.
A bolder party had rode forth,
Regardless of the stormy north,
In tilting to improve their skill,
Beneath the shelter of the hill;
But long ere dinner hour was come,
They one by one came swiftly home,
And the dank plume and dripping cloak
No signs of brightening weather spoke.
Glanville the reverend Bard had sought,
But found him wrapt in lonely thought,
And well instructed ne'er to speak
Lest some poetic trance he break,
Came back and whisper'd Blanch to try
At eve to win his minstrelsy.

The costly banquet plac'd ere noon,
The grace-cup past—the luncheon done,
And now the early supper o'er,
Around the Bard they close once more;
"Now, Raymond, hear a maiden's prayer!
Tell us some tale of Lady fair.

Bertha's sad story sing once more,
Or some new strain of wondrous lore!"—
Cried Blanch;—his eyes the Minstrel rais'd,
And whilst upon her face he gaz'd,
He look'd as would a Father mild,
When breathing blessings on his Child.—
" A tale twice told thy ear might tire,
The guests annoy, or chafe thy Sire;
Last night, as slow my taper burn'd,
A story to my mind return'd,
Told by a Wanderer old and pale,
Himself a sharer in the tale:
E'en yet he seems before mine eye
As I receiv'd his latest sigh.
Nobles, give ear, and mark the fate
Which once attended feudal hate!"

THE

Legend of Furness.

PART I.

'Tis Autumn's loveliest calmest hour,
When scarce is heard the Zephyr's sigh
To rustle through the forest bower,
Or o'er the lonely heath to die.

Light floating o'er the glowing west,
In crimson rich or waving gold,
The varying clouds the Sun invest,
Or slow their glittering skirts unfold.

Along the mountain's purple side,
Soft lights and shades confusedly blend,
And where yon murmuring waters glide,
In pale blue wreaths the mists ascend.

Whilst sable Clougha's lofty head
Still bright with setting sunbeams glows,
Where Nightshade vale's brown oaks are spread,
Her first soft shadows Darkness throws.

There shelter'd in the solemn dale
Thy wondrous abbey, Furness! (15) stands;
And proudly rising o'er the dale,
Seems scarce the work of human hands.

For now, as Eve's last glories fall
On stately towers with sculpture rich,
More lofty seems each lengthen'd wall,
More deeply carved each shadowy niche.

Scarce seem the cherub forms of stone,
Which spread their wings o'er yonder shrine;
And where that glowing beam is thrown,
The angel group stands all divine!

From each arch'd window's graceful height,
What dazzling splendors seem to burn!
They catch the Sun's rich crimson light,
And all his varying hues return.

What sweetly solemn holy strain
Now flows those darkling walls along,
To calm the throb of mortal pain!—
Is it the woodland Spirit's song?

Hark!—'tis the organ's lofty tone
Full rising on the languid gale!
Its deep rich notes are heard alone,
Long echoing down the shadowy dale!

And now as these still vales along
The holy soothing vesper dies,
It seems of Angel choirs the song,
Soft floating on mild evening skies!

Now slowly through the cloister's shade,
In sable weed or snowy veil,
Each reverend nun, and votive maid,
Seek the calm convent's sacred pale.

Is this sweet solemn soothing scene
The sure abode of peace alone?—
Here—ne'er was seen Distraction's mien—
Or heard keen Sorrow's heartfelt moan?

Shrouded by these majestic towers
The passions sink in studious rest;
Beneath these richly sculptur'd bowers,
Surely holy rapture thrills each breast!

Where peace and learning seem to dwell,
Mark those deep lines of woe and care!
Where yon dim window lights the cell,
Behold the image of Despair!

See that fair form in youth's first glow,
As tow'rd the Cross are raised her eyes:—
Are those Devotion's tears that flow?—
Are those pure Rapture's sainted sighs?

In dreams of heavenly spousal love,
Angelic transports does she share?
And, rising earthly joys above,
Quit each low thought of joy and care?

By Fortune's fatal storms oppress'd,
Wrecked on the rocks of guilt or woe,
The wearied bosom here may rest,
And feel the streams of comfort flow.

The studious Sage, whose frigid breast
Ne'er felt the pure the mutual flame,
May toil, by Learning's pride impress'd,
And give to latest time his name.

There are some pure, some youthful hearts
That catch the wild Enthusiast's glow;
And oft, in momentary starts,
May feel such fancied raptures flow:

But can a state that rends away
Life's purest, sweetest, holiest ties,
The Almighty Father's will obey,
Or hope for favor in his eyes?

Can He who bids the simple dove
Rear the young nestlings in the wild,
Frown on the parent's anxious love,
And as his victim claim the Child?

Oft too, alas!—the parent's mind
By pride or passion led astray,
The hapless victim has resign'd,
To hopeless lingering woe a prey.

And such is she who in that cell
Lowly before the altar lies;
Those tears no sacred raptures swell,
No warm devotion prompts those sighs.

Back flow the ringlets of her hair,
And o'er her graceful shoulders play;
And from her cheek so soft, so fair,
The rose has scarcely died away.

Still those fair tresses gaily twine,
As late in Clougha's lofty hall,
Her father bade the jewels shine,
To deck them for the festive ball.

And that faint glow that o'er her cheek
Seems yet with languid tint to move,
Of that soft moment's joy can speak
When first she heard the vows of love!

Soon must the priest without a sigh
Those lovely golden tresses shear,
And soon that last faint glow must die
Beneath pale sorrow's ceaseless tear!

Long had fair Eva gaily bloom'd,
Her mother's joy, her father's heir,—
For in yon chapel lie entomb'd
Three sons—their earlier, prouder care:

Yet never blossom of their race
Shone lovelier than this opening flower;
Ne'er smiled with fairer, sweeter grace,
The rose-bud dew'd with vernal shower.

And the rich gem of brightest ray
That in their casket lay enshrin'd
Could not such lustre pure display—
Less polish'd was than Eva's mind.

And worthy of this lovely flower,
And of its bright embosom'd gem;
Was Albert—heir of Percy's power—
The noblest scion of that stem.

Now firmly knit in friendship's band,
Was Clougha's Lord and Percy's Sire;
Though once had blaz'd throughout the land,
The fiercest rage of feudal ire.

Dark are the tales of days of yore,
And mixed with many a legend wild:
Yet 'twas believ'd, by vassals hoar,
Blood had a noble sword defiled.

And still, at times, an ancient tale,
Was whisper'd through proud Clougha's hall;
That in a dark sequester'd vale,
The heirs of each high House must fall.

But now of Clougha's ancient line,
Alone a gentle maid remains—
Then every fear of fate resign!
And laugh at Superstition's chains!

To guard from future strife and care
United be their joy and pride!
Of Percy's gay and gallant heir,
Let Eva bloom the beauteous bride!

Pledg'd are their hands, join'd are their hearts,
Fixt is the joyful nuptial day,
When high commands to distant parts,
Compel the Percy's bold array!

Why does that deep—that death-like gloom
Pass o'er the brow of Albert bold?—
Why as if laid within the tomb.
Is Eva lifeless—pallid—cold?

Of parting's short the pains are sweet,
And soft the tear that flows the while;—
Dear is the hope again to meet,
The tear is dried by welcome's smile.

Then part not thus—ye lovely pair!
These deep desponding sighs restrain!
For April's noon is soft and fair
Though morning dawn 'mid clouds and rain:

Thus spake his sire—then drew away
Young Albert, all to woe resign'd,
His heart wild dread portents dismay,
Strange mystic warnings of the mind!

But soon the camp—the martial scene—
The pomp of war—his soul returns,
Lightens again his graceful mien,
And bright the hero's courage burns.

THE

Legend of Furness.

PART II.

Round Clougha's towers loud swells the storm,
And fast descends the rushing rain,
And gathering clouds a black shade form,
O'er mountain-cliff and heath-clad plain.

Swift thundering down the rugged scar
Is heard the brook's impetuous roar;
And distant echoes answer far
The dash of waves against the shore.

But hush'd are Clougha's lofty halls,
No bridal-feast is there display'd;
And sweetly Sleep's soft influence falls
On serving page, and lowly maid.

The pallet hard,—the straw-roof'd cot,
May boast soft dreams and visions fair;
Of splendid couch 'tis oft the lot
To bear a load of guilt and care.

Deep sullen passions of the breast,
May scare proud Joy from lordly tower;
And Love—by absence chill'd—depress'd
Can chase repose from beauty's bower.

Fair Eva!—round thy costly bed,
Pale grief has wrapp'd her tear-dew'd veil!
And round thy lovely languid head,
Sad shades of future sorrow sail!

As o'er her breast the ringlet plays,
It oft is rais'd by slow-breath'd sighs;
And to her cheek the bright drop strays,
Through the dark fringe that shades her eyes.

Now brighter dreams her sorrows hush,
And every anxious care beguile;
O'er that soft cheek pale roses blush,
Round those ripe lips sweet dawns the smile.

Tears, smiles and sighs light varying join'd,
Like Spring's thin clouds o'er blooming May,—
As Hope's bright gleam spreads o'er the mind,
Will melt into Love's purest ray.

Ronald of Clougha, through thy soul,
A tide of darker passion flows!
Now envy spreads her base control—
Now wounded pride indignant glows!

Thy gilded couch's lofty plume,
Brings thy proud helm before thy sight;
The splendid arras round thy room
Reminds thee of the distant fight!

The thunder bursting o'er thy towers,
Seems but the battle's angry roar;
The gale—that shout which victory pours,
When flies the foe the hostile shore.

Thy waking starts evince thy pangs,
As rage or pride thy bosom wrings;
In dreams they deeper strike their fangs,
And heavier flap their demon wings.

Thy sovereign oft thy praise has heard,
And high command to thee assign'd;—
But Percy, at this hour preferr'd—
Has roused the furies in thy mind.

His gallant son thou deem'st the cause,
Thou hast no valiant dauntless heir!—
And impious dar'st upbraid His laws,
Who gave thee but a daughter fair.

As frantic pride, and envy pale
By turns that throbbing bosom tore;
His thoughts turn full on that wild tale,
Prophetic held, in days of yore.

'Tis told—by sages deeply taught,—
That tempting demons have the power,
When, with fell rage the heart is fraught,
To profit by the guilty hour.

Can man those mysteries dark explain—
Those awful visions of the night?
Are they but phantoms of the brain—
Or pass they clear to mortal sight?

With tenfold fury burst the storm,
  Then sudden fell to deathlike still—
And rising slow—an awful form
  Gleam'd on the distant heath-clad hill!

High crag and scar untouch'd it pass'd
  Nor fell nor brook its path confined;—
It cross'd the deep wide moat at last
  Beneath its course the waters shined.

The wall divides—the stately Shade
  Then enter'd through the opening wide,
In chieftain's splendid garb array'd,
  The blood slow dropping down its side!

Stern was the frown that o'er its face,
  A double weight of horror shed!
What human eye unscar'd can trace
  The deep-fixt anger of the dead?

The right-hand held an antique scroll,
  Whose brazen clasps untouch'd unclose;
And slow the letter'd folds unroll—
  —That dark prophetic tale of woes!

As Ronald's wide dilated eyes,
On that strange awful vision gaz'd,
Tow'rds where the towers of Furness rise,
Its hand the Spectre slowly raised!

One moment still, and fixed it stood,
Then sad and sternly seem'd to show
The spot where Nightshade's foaming flood
And Clougha's brook united flow.

Slow clos'd the scroll—slow sinks the hand—
Slow fades the shade from Ronald's sight;—
The massy walls uninjured stand—
The lamp resumes its silver light!

And o'er the storm of Ronald's soul,
Is spread a sudden fearful calm—
Does awe-struck pride his rage control?
Does peace distil her heavenly balm?

No!—in that dark that guilty hour,
When each pure guard its charge resign'd,
Came Superstition's dreadful power
And wound her fetters round his mind.

Yet feelings strong, o'er that dark brow,
Force the cold dews of pain to start;
And those pale lips refuse the vow
That quivers in his inmost heart.

His daughter's prayers—her mother's tears
Each opening charm that round her smiled;
Before his mental eye appears—
And calls the sire to spare his child.

But envy, rage, and feudal pride—
The future woe again reveal'd;—
Each softer feeling cast aside,
And the dread lot of Eva seal'd.

Can he endure the fearful sight,
Of heart-struck woe, or wild despair?
No!—let her at the dawning light
To Furness with her train repair!

And to her artless duteous ear
The well-feign'd tale with care convey!—
Of high commands, which call each peer,
His sovereign's summons to obey!

Then let each soft monastic art,
To soothe her spotless mind be tried!—
Win her from love's gay hopes to part,
And bloom a heaven-devoted bride!

Bright o'er the mountain rose the sun,
And ting'd its top with golden light;
As down its side the streamlets run,
Their dashing waters sparkle bright.

Slow moving tow'rds the gloomy west,
Pass'd the light wreck and stormy cloud;
And on the distant ocean's breast
Rest heavy as a sable shroud.

Spring's blooming honors o'er the ground
Lie scatter'd by the midnight gale;
Strewing each path—rent boughs are found,
Just clothed with budding foliage pale.

The gilded vanes of Clougha's hall
Shine gaily in the spreading beam;
And bright the sparkling rain-drops fall
That from each rich'd carv'd gable stream.

O'er the broad moat the bridge is down,
Whilst wide expanded stands the gate;
In doublet green, and tufted gown,
The Porter and his train await.

But where is Eva?—at that hour—
Despite of envy, rage, and pride,
The father own'd soft nature's power
And in his heart the furies died.

As round her Sire, she fondly clung,
And through the falling tear-drops smiled,
What direful pangs his bosom wrung,
Ah!—must he sacrifice his Child?—

Oh, Superstition!—deadliest ill
That e'er from deepest darkness rose!
'Tis thine the glowing heart to chill,—
Or wake its keenest fiercest throes!

Thy boast is—o'er the feeling mind
To spread thy dark destructive reign!
And, in thy galling fetters, bind
The fine strung nerve, the high wrought brain!

When every feebler demon fail'd,
Thine was the power,—the matchless art—
That o'er the Father's soul prevail'd,
And forc'd him from his Child to part!

As down the winding vale they move,
More deep and solemn seems the shade;
The dark oaks meet their paths above,
The stream with hoarser murmurs stray'd.

And as thy towers, proud Furness! rose
The beauteous victim dropp'd a tear;
Nor could that spotless breast disclose,
Whence sprung that wild—that sudden fear.

As flow'd the Matins' holy lay—
As swell'd the organ's lofty tone—
The rose died from her cheek away,
She check'd the low-breath'd inward moan.

As from beneath the stately choir
Appears the graceful female train,
The reverend Monks' slow steps retire,
Hush'd is the sweetly solemn strain.

Whilst Eva's timid artless breast
Now thrill'd with awe, now throbb'd with fear,
To hail and bless her beauteous guest,
The Abbess and her train drew near.

Was that a form by Heaven design'd
For cold forc'd prayer, or heartless vow?—
Those eyes that beam so full of mind—
That smooth calm placid open brow?

That stately step—that graceful air—
That pensive smile that wins the soul—
That cheek so pale, so mildly fair—
That voice which can each heart control?

The world to her was all unknown,
Alike its flowers—its thorns untried;
Her father sunk in fight o'erthrown,—
Whilst yet a babe—her mother died!

Now, Abbess of that stately fane,
Far distant shrines her will obey;
Yet, dear to her, her only train,
And mild and gentle was her sway.

But softest care, or tenderest love,
Could nought in that dread hour avail;
Or the wild pangs of grief remove,
When first disclos'd the fearful tale.

In vain, to Eva's outrag'd heart,
Was whisper'd peace or soothings mild;
—A parent act the tyrant's part!—
—The sire deceive his only child!

Time vainly pass'd on noiseless wings,
The transports of her grief to calm;
No mild Lethean cup he brings,
Firm faithful love rejects that balm.

The Matins wake to tears and sighs,
Pale Sorrow dims the noontide beam;
And Vespers leave those dewy eyes
To mourn o'er blighted hope's last gleam.

The snowy veil may shade thy brow,
The sable weed enfold thine heart!—
Can they unbind Love's plighted vow!—
Or aught save Death compel to part?

THE

Legend of Furness.

PART III.

Hush'd is the battle's dreadful roar,
The trumpet's loud and angry strain;
From gory field and hostile shore,
Returns the joyful victor's train!

High wave the Chieftains' lofty plumes,
And shining arms glance back the ray;
Each eye proud conquest's fire illumes,
As bright the waving banners play.

Each mountain, cliff, and rugged scar
Echoes the bugles lively note,
As down the distant valleys far
Loud airs of martial music float.

But sweeter to the warrior's ear
Breathes the soft voice its welcome kind,
From lips by absence made more dear,
Or friends or hearts by kindred join'd.

The lowly vassal to his breast
Exulting clasps his faithful wife;
And to the sire's fond heart are press'd
The infant treasures of his life.

And many a lovely, graceful, dame,
To hail her lord with joy appears;
Here noble boys their fathers claim,
There daughters bloom midst sighs and tears.

Oh, Love!—thy pure thy rapturous hour,
Through every stage of life is known!
Is lowly state beneath thy power?—
Can splendour chase thee from the throne?

To lordly power, or humble lot,
Thou canst thy genuine joys impart;
Alike in palace and in cot—
Thy empire is the human heart!

But was there one whom most he sway'd
Since his resistless reign begun?
'Twas he whom all that train obey'd—
Brave Percy's gallant noble son!

Blame not—if swell'd his youthful heart
With transport,—not unmixt with pride!
He deem'd his triumph would impart,
New pleasure to his plighted bride!

O'er Percy's lofty lordly tower
Proud conquest's banners are display'd;
And in each stately hall and bower
The Baron's splendid feast is laid.

To deck that board with duteous care,
Has hunter, fisher, archer tried;—
Each quarry brought of earth or air,
And tenant of the crystal tide.

The Ptarmagan from mountain's brow,
The Woodcock from the lonely glen,
The beauteous Pheasant from the bough,
The Wild Boar from the savage den.

The Stag beneath the forest shade
Has felt the arrow in his side;
The Wild Swan, in the watery glade,
With blood her snowy plumes has dyed.

Whilst all the luxuries that the field,
And richly cultur'd plain afford,
Their various treasures freely yield
To deck the Baron's festal board.

O'er the chas'd flagon's silver rim
The nut-brown mantling bubbles rise;
And round the golden goblet's brim
The wine-drops with the ruby vies.

Then did the Minstrel's honor'd train,
The splendid hall and banquet share;
Sure hope of joy and mirth were vain—
—Unless the Sons of Song were there.

And sweet and loud their notes arose—
The lofty roof returned the lay
That sung of triumph o'er their foes,
And bless'd their well-won festal day.

THE MINSTREL'S SONG.

OH!—welcome to thy Father's halls,
Brave heir of Percy's ancient line!
Deck'd is the board—sweet music calls—
And laughs for thee the rosy wine!

Sweet is repose when bought by toil,
When through the stormy winter's day
The patient peasant turns the soil;
Or Summer calls to tend the hay.

When Evening falls, he home returns,
From anxious care and labour free;
His children sport—the fagot burns—
And wakes his heart to harmless glee!

The chieftain, on the mountain's brow,
Has chased the swift and timid deer;
Or 'neath the forest's tangled bough,
Has met the Boar with fatal spear.

The Sun has set—the bugle horn
Has called the hunters from the chase;
And free from pomp, with garments torn,
Around the board each finds a place.

The leaf-thatch'd hut in forest shade,
The cavern by the torrent's side,
Has then more genuine mirth display'd,
Than all his castle's splendid pride.

But sweeter far than peasant's rest,
Or hunter's cheer by wood or cave,
Is the proud joy that swells the breast,
When back in triumph come the brave.

When for the battle's savage roar,
And pibroch's loud and angry strain,
Along the lake's calm verdant shore,
Swells the lov'd welcome home again.

From fields of battle bravely fought—
From fields of conquest proudly won—
Thou—Glory's freshest wreaths hast brought,
Brave Percy's noblest, brightest Son!

Then welcome to thy Father's halls—
True heir of Percy's gallant line!
To scenes of mirth thy Minstrel calls—
And waits for thee the rosy wine.

Ceas'd the gay strain—the descant proud!
When a strange Minstrel rises slow;
Low o'er his harp his head he bow'd,
As one opprest by weightiest woe.

His snowy beard—his reverend face—
The sable robes that round him spread—
Seem'd festive hall unmeet to grace,
And cast o'er all a nameless dread.

Sadly around his eyes he cast,
Then to the strings his hand applied:
Like the last moan of wintry blast,
The deep low solemn prelude sigh'd.

So sad yet sweetly tun'd the tongue,
Which pour'd that mournful warning strain,
That as the notes responsive rung
Each bosom throbb'd with tender pain.

THE BARD'S SONG.

Yes, youthful Warrior!—thine's this hour!
This is thy day of mirth and pride!
Yet think,—to fix thy right and power—
How thy brave followers nobly died!

Let laurel wreaths thy temples shade!
Let notes of joy and triumph swell!
The hero sinks, in earth low laid—
Hark, the slow solemn funeral knell!

The flowers have sprung the wreath to twine,
By Beauty's hand for Valour wove;
And bright their hues were form'd to shine,
Emblems of glory, joy, and love!

Lowly they bend each blooming head,
And slowly drops the fragrant tear;
They mourn for Beauty, blighted, dead,
They drobp around the silent bier.

Then youthful Hero!—drain the bowl,
And join the feast of Glory's day;—
But—whisper to thine inmost soul—
Pride—joy—and love must pass away!

When ceas'd the Song a murmur rose,
Amongst the gay and gallant train;
But soon the enlivening goblet flows,
And Mirth resumes her sportive reign.

Yet to young Albert's faithful breast
A crowd of anxious feelings flew;
For in this mournful warning guest,
Proud Clougha's ancient Bard he knew.

Oh!—slow to him the moments pass—
Condemn'd to blend in mirth's gay tide—
Who marks the sand that from the glass
Must drop 'ere he shall meet his Bride!

But, ah! more slow—more sad that hour!
How dim the eye!—the cheek how pale!
Whilst shades of future sorrows lower—
And the sad heart forebodes the tale.

THE

Legend of Furness.

PART IV.

'Tis past!—that burning throb of heart—
That strong concussion of the brain—
Which bids the death cold dewdrop start,
Which the soul ne'er can feel again!

To sudden hope, from wild despair
Rises the youthful Warrior's soul;
No cruel vow has bound the fair,
Shall then her Father's pride control?

No!—he has rent each sacred tie,
That should a duteous daughter bind;
Now with her Albert she may fly,
Alike unstain'd in fame and mind.

The Bard his friend Love ever calls—
Ah!—Minstrel, can he plead in vain?
No, soon 'neath Furness' stately walls
Tune thou thy sweetest holy strain!

Oh!—think of her, who as a Child
So sweetly prattled on thy knee,
Then view her now!—deceiv'd—beguil'd—
And strain each nerve to set her free.

Let soft persuasion—powerful gold—
Each soothing art—each wile be tried,
Our secret purpose to unfold
To my betroth'd—imprison'd Bride!

The hour is come—'tis night's still noon,
Wrapt in deep shades the valleys sleep;
And rising slow, th' autumnal Moon
Just dawns above yon wood-crown'd steep.

But, ah! no silvery hue she wears,
To tinge the clouds with lustre bright;
Large, dim and fiery red she glares,
And casts a threatening lurid light!

No dews distil their gentle balm
To gem the drooping flowret's eye;
And sad and awful seems the calm,
Unbroken by the Zephyr's sigh.

There is a languor to be felt,
A sullen demon rules the air—
That bids the heart of courage melt,
And sinks the fearful to despair.

Yet one soft tender timid Maid,
Regardless of the lowering sky,
Beneath the brown oaks deepest shade
With lightest step is seen to hie.

The glance of steel—the rustling brake—
The step so rapid, firm, and true—
The boughs that now dividing shake
Disclose the Percy to her view!

They meet once more, and each fond heart
In silence tells its tender tale;
Despair's dark gloomy shades depart,
And hope's bright rays once more prevail.

Oh !—pause not thus—this is no hour
On love or rapturous joys to dwell!
Think of an angry Father's power,
And hasten down yon darksome dell!

There shall ye find a lonely cave,
By hermits used in days of yore;
Hark!—sure an answer Echo gave
To sounds that swept yon mountain o'er.

Fly, fly,—a voice is on the wind!
The Minstrel cries,—your path is known;
Nor turn—nor pause—nor look behind—
Let this hoar head their wrath atone!

O'er yon high crags an oak is laid,
Just seen athwart the angry gleam;
Firmly across it bear the maid,
Then spurn it in the rushing stream!

Up the wild dell, so lone and waste,
By terror wing'd, the Lovers flew;
One gallant hand the Fair embrac'd,
The other grasp'd his falchion true.

On either side dark rocks arose,
Deep worn in many a dismal cave;
Till in one steep high scar they close,
Down which the brook is heard to rave.

The tramp of steed—the clash of arms,
Along the rocky pathway rung;
The Lover clasp'd her fainting charms,
And on the riven oak-bridge sprung.

Firm was his step—love nerv'd his heart—
Half had he cross'd the torrent o'er—
When flash'd the lurid lightning's dart,
And burst the thunder's deafening roar!

And, crashing loud down crag and stream,
At once the fatal oak-bridge fell!
Then rose one wild, short female scream,
Long echoing down the winding dell!

Her torn wet veil—his broken plume—
Next morn were cast the stream beside;
But ne'er to rest in stately tomb
Was found young Albert or his Bride!

Yet still, 'tis said, at that dread hour
Wild shouts of ghastly laughter rung!
And o'er proud Clougha's ancient tower
Fell songs of triumph, demons sung!

And sailing round Lord Ronald's head,
Dread forms were seen to point, and glide—
And taunt—till strength and reason fled,
And—the wild raving maniac died.

And still will shuddering shepherds tell,
The awful burden of that strain,
That, swept at midnight o'er the fell,
And died upon the distant main.

To demon's lips 'twas only given
To hint the fall of Clougha's line;
Their fate was no decree of heaven,
But wretched—guilty Sire,—'twas thine!

The Phantom that before thee stood,
Was rais'd by wrath, and fierce despair;—
It pointed to the fatal flood,
But 'twas thy rage that forc'd them there.

'Twas not Religion's holy flame
Which bade thee sacrifice thy child!
—Thy envy rose—the Tempter came—
And at thy dark delusion smiled!

Ere left to us, the human mind
Must every heavenly guard forego!
—Who tempts the Tempter is resign'd
To deepest guilt—and endless woe.

Wild were the notes which clos'd the song,
The lofty roofs the tones prolong,
And seem, as still adown the gale
Were borne the phantoms of the tale;
But, when in silence stood the Bard,
Say—did he gain his wish'd reward?—
Praise, to the Minstrel ever dear,
Praise, that his inmost heart can cheer?
The guerdon sole his art can claim—
A feather on the breath of fame—
Beauty's sweet smile—youth's gentle tear—
A cypress wreath to grace his bier—

And a sad strain from Wanderer lone,
Pour'd o'er his monumental stone!
As, through soft twilight's gloom he strays,
To trace the tales of former days;
Whilst fancied voices seem to mourn,
And hands aërial deck his urn?
Some were awe-struck—he could discern
An air of thought—a visage stern—
Wore many a chief;—a look of dread
Was o'er some matrons' features spread;
For it was thought that Cover's Prior
Was seen in anger to retire;
But Trinian, with a smile address'd
The Minstrel as 'mine honor'd guest;'—
And gentle Blanch was seen to glide
To her lov'd place—the Harp beside;
And many a lovely maiden mild
Wept Eva's woes, or sweetly smiled
Through tears,—that like bright drops of dew
Hang on the rosebud's vermil hue;
Whilst many a youthful Chevalier
Strove with kind looks the Bard to cheer:
"Bring quick the mighty wassail bowl!"
Lord Trinian cried,—"for on my soul!

Thy story a deep gloom has cast,
Sadder than that wild wintry blast.
Come gentle Dames!—the brim just press—
And thus your kindly thoughts confess!
Nobles!—a deeper goblet drain,
To him, who blending joy and pain,
Can thus Life's changing scenes display,
And point to brighter hopes the way!
This is my pledge—ne'er from my heart
May love of Poesy depart!—
May all my race—sweet Song regard,
Or e'er share feast ungrac'd by Bard."

SIXTH DAY.

At early dawn, the Matin bell
Sabbath proclaim'd o'er heath and fell;
Cover's deep toll is heard afar
Echoed by lofty rock and scar,
Solemn and slow it seems to say,
Another week has pass'd away!
What part, of all the hours thus given,
Will bear th' all searching eye of Heaven?
Though time on noiseless wing has flown,
Canst thou recall the moments gone?
Canst thou his rapid flight delay,
Or call thine own—this opening day?
Haste then—improve the narrow span,
Exert the noblest right of Man!
That power, the lowest may possess,—
His fellow man to aid and bless!

If ample wealth thy means extend,—
'Tis thine to be the Sufferer's friend,
Bid the rich stream of Bounty flow,
To mitigate each form of woe!
Is lowly poverty thy lot?—
Thou still canst seek the humble cot,
To dry the Widow's lonely tear,
The Orphan's drooping heart to cheer,
Smooth the sad pillow of decay,
And point to happier worlds the way;
Then shall the sunshine in thy breast
Prove—that to bless—is to be bless'd!
Now Lord and Knight and stately Dame,
To Cover's holy Abbey came;
Vassal, and serving Maid and Page,
Childhood's first year, and feeble Age;
The youthful Squire, the Veteran gray,—
All meet in reverence of the day.
How deep the silence spread o'er all,
No whisper heard—no footsteps fall!
Veil'd every face—bent every knee—
As wrapt in holy ecstasy!
And as the sun's just rising beam
Through yon rich window casts a gleam,

How soft and mellow is the glow
It sheds upon the scene below!
The lofty arches stand display'd,
Rang'd in alternate light and shade;
Whilst one more brilliant ray is thrown
On yon high monumental stone,
And shines upon that image fair,
As though it lov'd to linger there!
As though it could warm life impart—
Awake once more the gentle heart,
And rouse to memory, joy, and breath,
The lovely form that sleeps beneath!
Where stands the Altar, richly spread,
A deep full crimson shade is shed,
As through the curtains' ample fold
The light falls on each vase of gold,
Pix, chalice, wafer-dish, or gem
Which decks our Lady's diadem.
Whilst silver censers, through the gloom,
Spread a thin cloud of sweet perfume.
With waving curls, and vests like snow
That round their youthful figures flow,
The choral band, with sober pace,
Now take upon the floor their place,

Whilst on the lower steps are seen
Each Novice, with more serious mien;
Then, ranged the lofty altar round,
In sable robes which sweep the ground,
Each reverend forehead lowly bow'd,
Kneel those, who to their God had vow'd
Power to renounce and wealth despise,
And seek their treasure in the skies.
Now from his throne, with stately tread,
His costly vestments open spread,
Before the altar, as he stands,
The graceful Abbot waves his hands,
And gives his blessing to the throng:
Then bursts the holy choral song,
The organ swells the lofty strain,
Sweet warblings join the gentle train
Of Wensley's Nuns, conceal'd from sight,
In the clos'd gallery's shaded height.
Now full display'd each mystic sign—
The Wafer blest—the holy Wine:—
To sacred lips alone 'tis given
To share in the full feast of Heaven!
Since worldly care, or pomp, or pride,
Must still the Laity divide—

Fierce angry strife or earthly love
The feelings of their bosoms move—
They must abstain,—but still may share
The Bread,—bestow'd with reverend care.

Hark, the loud bell's deep solemn toll
With awe and terror thrills each soul!
A blazing taper in is borne,
And gazed upon with fear and scorn—
Emblem of him—who in his pride
The Church's anger has defied!
Whilst the frown o'er his brow is spread,
And his cheek dyed a deeper red,
The Abbot breathes, in accents slow,
The curse which dooms the wretch to woe—
Dissolves for him each tender tie—
Dooms him to lasting infamy!—
Strips him of worldly wealth and power,
Blasting his waking—sleeping hour—
Throughout this life denies him rest—
And bars the mansions of the blest!
At every awful pause, the bell
Sounds with sad note his funeral knell,
Then slow before their awe-struck sight
Quench'd is the taper's blazing light! (18)

—Dark emblem of his fearful doom,
Who unrepentant fills the tomb!
Then, the low "miserere" sung
With quivering lip and faltering tongue,
Seems with sweet sorrow to implore
The wanderer to return once more.

Why does young Glanville bend his head?
Why from his eyes are tear-drops shed?
Is it the outlaw's fate he mourns?
Is it that Oswald's tale returns
To his mind's eye? Ah! no—that tear
Springs from a source more soft, more dear;
His mother fills that stately tomb,
That lovely rose, in youth's first bloom,
Whilst every earthly joy seem'd given,
Was mark'd—lov'd—pluck'd—and borne to Heaven!
And as the father's anxious eye
Turns with fond sorrow on his boy,
It seems to say—whilst thou art left
I am not yet of all bereft!
Whilst with soft sighs and heaving breast
Blanch closely to his side has press'd,
And whisper'd words of comfort mild
To soothe the parent and the child.

The guests return'd—with sober grace
The banquet on the board they place;
Though rang'd around in order fair,
No thoughtless levity is there!
Courteous and kind, yet somewhat grave,
A fit example Trinian gave;
That he deem'd holy Sabbath day
No time for idle sport or play:
Decently cheerful and serene
Around each noble guest is seen;
The grace-cup past—the blessing o'er—
To Cover all return once more,
The holy vesper rite to pay,
And close with reverence meet the day!

Luncheon is past—and twilight's veil
Is slowly drawn o'er hill and dale;
Throughout the valley all is still,
Save the soft murmur of the rill,
Or, by the distance render'd low,
The rapid river's ceaseless flow;
Or, when by whispering breeze borne near,
Its fall at Aisgarth meets the ear:
Enclos'd by wood and rock around,
Echo alone repeats the sound;

And rising pale o'er Yorebro's height,
The moon spreads round her silver light;
And Eve's most favourite peaceful star
Shines like a beacon seen afar,
The wanderer's terrors to o'ercome,
And guide the spirit to its home.
There is in Sabbath Eve a calm,
A soft, sweet, solemn, mental balm,
That spreads its influence through the breast,
And soothes the throbbing heart to rest!
The soul of age from care withdraws,
And bids the youthful spirit pause!
The toil-wrung hands their labour cease,
And in the cottage rest in peace.
And all beneath proud Nappa's tower,
Met to enjoy the tranquil hour!
The burning oak, the hearth which crown'd,
Spread a warm ruddy glow around,
On many a costly vesture shone,
Or sparkled on some brilliant stone,
And brought to view the carket fair,
Which bound some lovely lady's hair;
Or, when its clear flame rose o'er all,
Show'd the bright armour on the wall,

And through the casements lofty height
Shone forth the moon's pure silver light,
And by its contrast seem'd to throw
On glowing warmth soft fleecy snow.
Within the deep recess reclin'd,
Whilst early days stole o'er his mind,
Or by poetic dream inspired,
Raymond the Bard sat far retired;
On his smooth crown the moonbeam plays,
And as his eye, with thoughtful gaze,
Is upward turn'd, the locks which spread
Around his venerable head—
His hoary beard, which waving roll'd
E'en to his girdle's crimson fold—
The mind which spoke upon his face—
His form not robb'd by age of grace,
Which still could former prowess show
Through his rich mantle's ample flow—
Seem'd as though some Magician sage,
Or Seer of long departed age,
Had once more to this earth return'd,
And o'er its fading glories mourn'd.
Thrill'd with deep awe, pleas'd or amaz'd
As some upon the Minstrel gaz'd,

A sigh from Trinian's breast which stole
Spoke the deep feelings of his soul;
And youthful Glanville whisper'd low,
Let that lov'd strain of sorrow flow!
The Bard his harp towards him drew,
And o'er its chords his fingers threw;
Sad—wild—yet sweet the prelude rung,
As tho' some gentle spirit sung—
Some pure inhabitant of air
Had stoop'd to soothe a mortal's care;
Or summer evening's latest sigh
Had wak'd the rich—soft symphony.

A Requiem.

Rest thou in peace! Life's toil is o'er,
Its joys, its sorrows are no more;
These ne'er to taste, or those deplore,
Rest thou in peace!

The loves of youth, the pride of age,
No more thy fancy can engage;
Clos'd now to thee is Life's last page,
Rest thou in peace!

No more on thee the storm shall blow,
The summer's sun, the winter's snow
Alike to thee who sleep'st below;
Rest thou in peace!

Thy Husband's pangs, thy Infant's tear,
Thy Home all silent now and drear,
Disturb not thee, who on the bier,
May rest in peace!

Upon thy cradle Fortune smil'd,
Thou wert sweet Beauty's darling child,
But thou wast not by them beguil'd—
Rest thou in peace!

Thou bloom'dst as blooms a lovely flower,
Just open'd by the vernal shower,
That dies beneath the sun's full power,
And rests in peace!

Like balmy dews thy accents fell,
Still, still on memory's ear they dwell,
Too pure mere earthly notes to swell,
They rose to Heaven!

If those thou lov'dst, yet left below,
Sink as o'erpower'd by mortal woe;
Shall not their sighs—their tears that flow,
Be all forgiven?

Yes! for thy God, who reigns above,
Whose dearest attribute is Love,
Felt all the pangs our hearts that move,
Whilst here below!

To Him, then, let our praises soar,
Who from Earth's stormy desert shore
Can bid us rise to part no more,
But rest in peace!

Soft as the infant's parting sighs,
Which on its mother's bosom dies,
Fell the sweet notes, sad, deep, and slow,
The soothing melody of woe;
Which, whilst it prompts the gushing tear,
Awakes a nerve so pure, so dear,

That—as enamour'd of the pain
All hung enraptur'd on the strain,—
That from this Earth the mind had stole—
And oped to heavenly joys the soul.
Then, as applauding whispers flow,
The honor'd Minstrel rises slow,
And graceful moving down the hall,
He waves a kind adieu to all;—
But as he passes Glanville by,
Casts on the youth a pensive eye—
"Thou knowest my wont,—on new-year's day
I join again your frolic gay;
Blest be to all this year's last hour!
And peaceful slumber wait each bower!"

SEVENTH DAY.

Veil'd in a cloud of solemn gray,
Arose the year's last parting day;
And as at times a shower pass'd by,
Or swept the gale with plaintive sigh,
Seem'd as though Nature join'd to mourn,
The hours that never can return!
As though the morrow's rising sun
Had not another year begun,
And spread its ample page sublime,
Beneath the rapid pen of Time;
Like Age, which marks its fading powers,
Weeps o'er its few short languid hours,
And, though all conscious of decay,
Would yet their final close delay,—
Unmindful that the reign of death
Ends with its last departing breath,

And that the last expiring sigh
Will waft to immortality!

Bright blaz'd the fire, the board was spread
With manchet loaf, and oaten bread,
The ample pasty richly brown'd,
Large bowls with milk or posset crown'd,
Huge round of beef, and haunch of deer,
And wild boar's ham add to the cheer;
Honey and many a dainty came,
To please the taste of gentle dame,
And down the centre of the board
Chas'd flagon, with rich liquors stor'd,
Were duly plac'd;—high-flavour'd wine,
Brought from the banks of distant Rhine;
Pigment and wassaill cup o'erflow'd,
And bright the brown October glow'd;
Whilst youthful pages wait around,
Plenty and social mirth abound!

The breakfast done—to pass the day,
All seek some sport or frolic gay;
To Bolton Castle some repair,
Tilting and tourney games to share;

Each deck'd with ribbon, scarf, or glove,
Fair token of his Lady-love;
For it was whisper'd, that the ring
Woul! soon be rode before the king,
And each by practice hop'd to vie
With flower of foreign chivalry:
A few old nobles, grave and sage,
Chose games more fitted to their age,
And one, placed close the hearth beside,
As on some deep research employ'd,
With solemn look was seen to pore
On a huge tome of mystic lore.
Boys, yet too young the lance to bear,
Or in bold knightly games to share,
And many a page of gentle blood
Sought the recesses of the wood,
With cross-bows to bring down the game,
And try their steadiness of aim;
Or, at the butts beneath the hill,
With bolt or shaft to prove their skill.

Within the ladies' hall and bower,
Embroidery fair beguil'd the hour;
As twirl'd the spindle on the floor,
Sung were some tales of fairy lore,

Or wondrous dreams, and portents told,
That made the hearers' hearts turn cold;
Of voices borne upon the wind
To arouse the fears of guilty mind;—
Of grizly phantom, that had stood
Beside the secret man of blood,
Or wanderer, lost on midnight wold,
Who found the purse of fairy gold;
But, at the first bright dawn of light,
The treasure vanish'd from his sight!—
Then would some noble matron tell
Of chance that to her youth befell;
Some feat of arms, some tourney proud,
Of Knight who constant love had vow'd;—
Profess'd himself her beauty's slave,
And many a costly jewel gave;
And who the train, all bright and gay,
That graced her happy bridal day!

Less gentle sports the eve beguiled;
Nobles laugh'd loud, and Ladies smiled
To see the hooded blind man pace
Around the hall, the rest to chase;
Or vainly guess, with cover'd sight,
The name of silent Lady bright.

When tired of this, they freely share
The ancient game of Post and Pair;—
Frolic and prank and mirth impart,
When gaiety reigns in the heart
We catch the laugh from those around,
And ours bids others' aid its sound.
Trinian reclin'd against the chair
Which Raymond would have fill'd, if there;
And when that some remark'd he sigh'd,
" I miss mine ancient friend," he cried;
" 'Tis ever thus, if he depart
I feel a void within mine heart.
Manhood was his, yet as a boy,
I ever sought his side with joy,
Upon my mind his precepts stole,
And rous'd to energy my soul:
My father lov'd him to his end,
He was my widow'd Mother's friend;
To them a duty dear is prov'd,
By loving him whom they have lov'd!
Highly I prize his gifted mind,
His soul from worldly care refin'd,
His influence o'er the untutor'd throng,
His matchless melody of song:

But higher far—and more I prize
Those dear sweet early tender ties,
Which bade me first his words attend,
And hail him, Guardian! Father! Friend!
As he display'd the heavenly road,
And taught my soul to seek its God!"

The Bard.

Who was that Bard?—in youth's first prime
'Twas his o'er Mossdale's rocks to climb,
Up Chopper-gill to force his way,
And through Black-rash unguarded stray;
From Cotter's top enraptur'd gaze (14),
When the sun spread his earliest rays.
As, before Morning's fragrant breath
Fled the light mist along the heath,
And rolling down the mountain's side,
The lovely landscape opened wide;
Like beauty smiling 'neath her veil,
When ruffled by the Summer's gale,
Rock, wood, and sweetly winding stream,
Shone gaily in the spreading beam;

Whilst on Stag's-Fell, the timid deer
Repos'd or brows'd uncheck'd by fear,
Or in half-sportive fight engage,
And threat and stamp in mimic rage,
Whilst high the exulting heath-cock flew,
From heather bells, impearl'd with dew,
The drops to sip, its bloom his feast,
The mountain's loveliest, loneliest guest.
When the sun shed his noontide fire,
The wandering stripling would retire;
Where Birk-rigg spread her sylvan skreen
Of mountain-ash and holly green;
When the small wren with quivering throat,
From every thicket pours her note,
There, on the flowery bank reclined,
Such soothing visions fill'd his mind,
As wake the wild poetic dream,
When on the eye of Fancy beam
Forms fairer than Earth's scenes contain,
The ideal offspring of the brain;
When sinking from his long day's course,
The sun stream'd red down Cotter force,
Glanc'd bright on tree and fractur'd stone,
And 'mid the stream reflected shone,

Where the dark bridge of riven oak,
Thrown wildly o'er from rock to rock,
Spans the deep linn, the rugged scar,
Unbroken by the endless war
Of rock and stream, whose ceaseless flow
Descends in snowy foam below,—
Save where, around the pool's rough brim,
The frothy bubbles dance and swim,
Then chang'd to fretted gold it shines,
Or glows like gems of India's mines.
Oft when the moon rose pale and still,
O'er Yorebro's distant heath-clad hill
He wander'd forth,—then rose his soul,
Uncheck'd by Reason's stern control,
To scenes which bid the Poet's eye
Flash with wild beams of ecstasy;
Through fairy lands the enthusiast strays,
Where, full to his enraptur'd gaze
Sights are display'd, and sounds reveal'd,
Which rest from coarser minds conceal'd;
Pure transports, that untainted flow
By aught of sin, or pain, or woe,
To his high-beating heart are given,
And seem a sweet foretaste of Heaven.

His too, 'tis said, at times that thrill,
That sudden, deep, and death-like chill
When more appears than nature gave,
And the dark secrets of the grave
Stand open to the mental sight,
And that, by more than human light,
He sees Time's lengthen'd scroll unroll'd,
As its dark characters unfold
Bright scenes of glory—scenes of woe—
That his lov'd native land must know!
—Sees of fair freedom's friends the fate,
From the dire arts of rage and hate,
Or, marks of Luxury the snare,
The fellest demons can prepare
To work a nation's deepest ill
And Heaven's most stern decrees fulfil!

Thus pass'd the Bard his earliest days,
Uncheck'd by want—unspoil'd by praise!
Ask'st thou his kindred, or his name?
Once high they stood in power and fame!
Ask'st thou his wealth?—this truth is known,
That lovely Dale was once his own!
Say,—sank his wealth 'neath party strife,
Had he not children, friends, or wife?—

Did guilt produce his overthrow,
Or fell dishonor give the blow?—
No!—never was that noble mind,
Where every virtue dwelt enshrin'd,—
Or stain'd by guilt—or sunk in shame—
Or ever soil'd his ancient name!
Ask not his tale!—where wilt thou find
Fortune long bless the tuneful mind?
How rarely, to such child of heaven,
Is worldly wealth and splendour given!
From him they're reft, but in their place
Is given each sweet poetic grace,
The tranquil soul, the will resign'd,
And all the energies of mind:
Yet still at times the tear will fall,
As his eye wanders through the hall;
And the half-stifled sigh deplore
Loves, scenes, and hopes for ever o'er;
Then, as his notes responsive rise,
Springs the soft tear to Beauty's eyes,
As secret sympathy imparts
His feelings to his hearer's hearts,
And the sweet notes that sadly flow
Wake all the luxury of woe.

Whene'er he joins the festal board,
'Tis not the Vassal and his Lord!
No, to the favor'd son of song,
The highest honors must belong;
Each noble hails him as his friend,
To him the youthful warriors bend,
And rival beauties seem to vie
For the calm praise of Raymond's eye;
Whilst back the bold retainers draw,
With reverence not unmix'd with awe.
Each closing year he thus retires,
Where, not the hardiest e'er inquires;
They fancy 'tis to some dark cell,
Where mystic forms and spirits dwell;
And, that constrained by powerful rite,
Pass slow before his gifted sight
The shades of those, whom fate shall doom
To fill the mansions of the tomb:
What King's or mighty Empire's fall,
What storms shall shake this earthly ball
And, from the portents of the skies,
Foresees what great events shall rise!
And that by him is read full clear
All that shall fill the coming year!

But, I believe—he goes to mourn
O'er those, long laid in silent urn;
To heave the sigh, the tear to shed,
And hold communion with the dead,
In those heart-breathing prayers that rise,
Heaven's dearest, purest, sacrifice?

Thus Trinian spake—then led the way
To the rich banquet, and the lay—
That loud and lustily was sung,
By many a wandering Minstrel's tongue,—
That bade the closing year, adieu!
And call'd for welcome to the new.

EIGHTH DAY.

GAY were the notes of hound and horn,
Which usher'd in the rising morn;
Floated light clouds through ether blue,
And fresh and high the breezes flew,
And glittering in the gleaming sun,
Down the hill-sides bright streamlets run;
And where arose the verdant skreen
Of prickly holly, ever green,
The sprightly wren pour'd forth her lay,
As joyous as in merry May;
And many a voice was heard to call
The loiterers to the breakfast-hall;
Hands warmly shook—kind thoughts express'd—
Now welcomed in each honor'd guest;
Then new-year presents are display'd,
And many a splendid gift convey'd;

Some golden chains and signets bring,
Some the chaste massive costly ring,
Ruby and pearl and carkets fair,
Fit to entwine in lady's hair.
To stately Dames, grave Nobles send
These tokens of a trusty friend:
And many a gallant youthful Knight
Makes offering to his Lady bright;
The Mansion's Lord stood silent by,
Then on the attendants casts his eye,
Who straight bore in a shining hoard
Of gifts, and laid them on the board:
A silver basket richly wrought,
By smiling blushing Blanch is brought,
Who archly raising half the lid
Shows that, 'midst broidered satin hid,
Lies many a prize for each to draw,
According to the ancient law,
By which no guest can feel the pain
Of fancied slight or cold disdain:
And Glanville round the goblet bears,
In which are placed the number'd shares,—
Opened—a general laugh goes round,
For not one blank can there be found;

Each Lady finds some pretty prize,
Such as can please a fair one's eyes;
And every Lord and gallant Knight
Gains sword or spear, or armour bright;
And boys and girls receive such toys
As sportive childhood most enjoys.
Now from without loud shouts resound,
And laughter gay is heard around;
And squeaking fife and thundering drum
Proclaim the Morrice-Dancers come;
The folding doors are opened wide,
And rushes in the merry tide;
First, clothed in white with ribbons gay,
The sprightly dancers lead the way;
Then serving damsel, herdsman, page,
Serf, huntsman, shepherd—all engage
In new-year carols, wild and free,
The pride of rustic minstrelsy.
Then from each hand as money showers,
At once exerting all their powers,
The scrambling group spread o'er the floor,
'Mid laughter, scream, and gay uproar,
Till all is found—then joyful cries
Of "largess, largess," loud arise,

And to the country round proclaim
The bounty of each knight and dame.

The breakfast past—ere clear'd the board,
" Now to the chase!" cried Nappa's Lord;
Then straight is heard the welcome sound
Of stately steed that paws the ground,
The snort, the stamp, the shrilly neigh,
The Huntsman's horn, the staghound's bay,
The lively halloo, light and clear,
And all that sportsman's heart can cheer;
The jocund sound the valley fills,
And echoes round the distant hills;
Across the park, adown the dale,
They sweep as swift as summer's gale;
Now by thick spreading oaks conceal'd,
Now by fair open glades reveal'd,
The manly group pass pleased in sight
Of many a lovely Lady bright,
Who gladly come the sport to share,
Guarded by trusty Usher's care.
Upon a milk-white palfrey placed,
Sweet Blanch rode first, with eager haste;
But when she saw the stag at bay
The gentle damsel turn'd away,

With trembling hand put back the knife,
Offer'd to take the creature's life;
Whilst pearl drops fill'd her soft blue eye,
To think the noble beast must die.
Young Glanville, who was hovering near,
Check'd by kind words the starting tear;
Drew her away, with tender care,
To see a snow-white mountain hare,
That by his trusty page was caught,
And now, with gentlest heed, was brought
To be by her fond favour bless'd,
Her harmless, playful, long-wish'd guest.
To her fair cheek the rose returns,
And with fresh heighten'd blushes burns.
Oh! happiest hours of life's young prime,
Uncheck'd by pain, unstain'd by crime,
Ere yet the heart is Passion's throne,
While love is to itself unknown;
Pure, soft Affection's sweetest charm
Just bids the artless bosom warm,
And the eye sinks it knows not why
When the loved form approaches nigh!
Can splendour, wealth, or power, impart
Such genuine transports to the heart?

Or aught of courtly pomp afford
Such pleasure to its sated Lord,
As the loved voice which breathes like balm
Across the bosom's scarce moved calm?

The eve in merry dance was pass'd,
Regardless of the howling blast;
Till the wide opening doors display'd
The new-year's Banquet duly laid;
Lord, Knight, and Squire, and Priest attend
The plenteous revel of their friend;
Cotter and serf, and soldier join
O'er the huge Round and smoking Chine;
Throughout the hall gay laughter rung,
And many a carol loud was sung,
And many a voice was heard to pray
For oft returns of NEW YEAR'S DAY.

NINTH DAY.

Dim clouds obscure the morning sky,
And swift and thick the snow-flakes fly,
And the wind whistles, wild and shrill,
Round rugged scar and mist-veil'd hill;
Work, song, and sport the day beguiled,
But when the evening hearth was piled,
And spread around its cheering ray,
The maidens whisper'd—"Ask a lay!"—
The Bard perchance has wonders view'd.—
Sweet Blanch! thou know'st, whate'er his mood,
To gain thy wish, ere half express'd.—
Glanville, who partly heard, and guess'd
What was the boon the fair one's sought,
With joy the intimation caught—
And pray'd the harp might join its strain
To some sweet tale of gentle pain;

Or wake its bold responsive string
To songs which wandering spirits sing,
Raymond with smiles the youth survey'd,
His hand upon his shoulder laid,
And whisper'd—" Well it suits thy age
In plots with damsels to engage!"—
Deep blushes instant dyed his cheek,
But ere excuse the youth could speak,
" I blame thee not,"—he cheering said—
" For never noble spirit led
To fields of conquest, fields of fame,
But what had thrill'd at WOMAN'S name;
Or ever held the helm of state,
But knew her influence rul'd his fate;
Or learned student e'er explored
Pure Learning's deepest, richest hoard,
But felt his brightest, dearest prize,
Was to be won from Woman's eyes!
Woman! the Poet's ceaseless dream!
His inspiration and his theme!
He ne'er the harp's best music moved,
Who had not loved, and been beloved!
Most sweet is sung the gentle lay,
Which paints young Passion's early sway;

And sweet, though sad, the strains which mourn
Around her ne'er-forgotten urn!
O Woman! through each change of life—
Mother or daughter—lov'd or wife!
Thine is the influence, thine the power,
To guard his gentlest, sternest hour!
Through Life's long toil to smooth the road,
Add to each joy, lighten each load!
To hold Religion's torch on high,
And lead to realms beyond the sky!

Whilst loud applauses manhood gave,
And snowy hands were seen to wave,
Raymond his harp towards him drew,
Swift o'er its chords his fingers flew,
Then spoke,—now, borne on Fancy's gale,
To Mona's mystic isle we sail,
To bring from her wild wave-beat strand,
A wondrous tale of Fairy Land!

THE

MILK-WHITE HOUND;

A Fairy Tale.

PART I.

Oh! trace upon the Infant's brow
The Cross's bless'd and mystic sign!
The holy bread prepare ye now,
And pour ye forth the sacred wine!

Straight let the Abbey's bell be rung,
And every Monk and Sister pray!
And solemn hymns and lauds be sung,
To chase the Fairies far away!

And let the deep-toned organ blow,
And join its notes to midnight gale;
Whilst blazing torches fiercely glow
To scare the sprites that round us sail!

Swift have they come o'er Ocean's wave,
From mountain's top, and valley lone;
From mighty Staffa's wondrous cave,
And from wild Kilda's druid stone.

Around the couch I see them stand,
Rejoicing in the Mother's woe,
That they may snatch to fairy land
The offspring of their ancient foe.

For long before the dawn of light,
Proud Peel! ([15]) thy heir to life shall spring;
Guard him from fairy elve and sprite!
Yea, guard your island's future King!

Wild were the notes in which was sung
The hoary Sybil's warning strain,
Round tower and rock and cliff it rung,
And swept along the stormy main.

On the Cathedral's tower she stood,
Her white locks streaming to the gale;
Loose flow'd her sable robe and hood,
And show'd her cheek as snow-drift pale.

Oh! many a Lady, through that night,
Join'd with the nuns in holy lays;
And, lest the tapers fail of light,
They bade the beacon turret blaze ([16]).

But when a lovely Boy was born,
Far other cares their minds engage;
For when did blooming youth not scorn
The counsels wise of reverend age?

Though holy priests the service press'd,
And bold retainers often mourn;
They waited—till a lordly guest
With noble Stanley ([17]) should return.

They waited—that in costly pall,
Where pearls and jewels richly blend,
Surrounded by her ladies all,
The Mother might her Son attend.

They waited—till the storm of war
Was past, and Chieftains free from care,
And that, from islands distant far,
Nobles might come to bless the heir.

Yet still, to guard from fairy sprite,
As threaten'd in that awful lay,
Six holy Nuns watch round by night,
And six fair Ladies all the day.

'Twas said, at midnight's fearful hour
Strange forms would near the cradle glide;
But still they sung the hymn of power,
Which tames the boldest Phantom's pride.

Then fairy harps sweet warblings rung,
To Elves that glanced in silk and gold;
But still the mystic lay they sung,
And still the Rosary they told.

Sure 'twas not hymn or prayer alone
That kept the Babe from danger free;
For playful Sprite has quickly flown
The spot where ancient Nun may be.

Phantoms might wandering pass that way,
Or frolic feats by Elves be done;—
But when did playful Spirits stay
With Matron grave, or hoary Nun?

Oh! 'twas at Eve's most lovely hour,
When gentle dews distil their balm;
When odours breathe from every flower,
And Zephyr only breaks the calm!

Like fretted gold, the glittering wave
Dances around the lonely isle;
Long beams stream down each sea-worn cave,
And e'en the dark rocks seem to smile.

The screaming gull her snowy wing
Scarce dips into the rippling tide,
Where wandering fishes lightly spring,
Or in long lines of silver glide.

And as round Peel the sun-beam glows,
And gilds each tower that fronts the west,
Seems as from Ocean's depths it rose,
And floated on its tranquil breast.

The Ladies talk'd, as maids will talk—
Of splendid ball, and revel gay;—
Of dear remember'd moonlight walk
With noble Lover, far away.

And sometimes lightly laugh'd at those
Who heeded what that crone should sing;
Or deem'd their Knight had fairy foes,
Or could be Father of a King.

Thus wild their harmless fancies stray'd,
On sports, or tales, or gallant men;
Nor mark'd that round the cradle play'd
A little fluttering, twittering Wren.

One moment at its foot she stood,
Next closer to its head she drew,
Then softly crept beneath its hood,
Then through the open portal flew.

The fair ones started—for the sound
Of wings was heard along the steep;
And, to the ocean's utmost bound,
They saw a mighty Eagle sweep.

Then sweet small voices gaily sung—
"Rejoice, rejoice!—the prize is won!
No king from Stanley's line has sprung—
To fairy realms we bear his Son!

His mother, of stern Maghul's line,
  Shall ne'er hold Son upon her knee,
Till holy tapers round him shine,
  And thrice-bless'd water set him free.

A thousand and a thousand miles
  The Babe shall pass ere dawn of day;
Gnomes, elves, and sprites, from all the isles,
  Haste, haste,—and bear the Boy away!"

Trembling with fear, the damsels flew,
  And eager search'd the cradle round;
But when the mantle back they threw,
  Alas!—no Infant there they found!

A shepherd on the mountain's height,
  Who watch'd his little flock at play,
Alone had seen the Eagle's flight,
  And deem'd some gentle lamb its prey.

A Fisher, who the rocks along
  Had spread his dripping nets to dry,
Had heard the rush of pinions strong,
  And caught an infant's feeble cry.

In vain, along the winding shore,
Their coursers fleet the attendants urge;
In vain the boatmen ply the oar,
And track with snowy foam the surge.

And low before the altar bow'd,
Damsel, and Nun, and Matron sage;
And many a costly gift they vow'd,
And many a holy pilgrimage.

And it was said,—some secret rites,
Some almost magic spells were done;
Brought by some wondrous learned Knights
From climes far nearer to the sun!

'Twas said,—they sought wild Staffa's cave
At night's mysterious, awful noon;
When highest swells the rushing wave,
Beneath the influence of the moon!

Who shall that Temple's wonders tell,—
The grandeur of that awful shrine,
Where mighty Nature seems to dwell
Amidst her attributes divine?*

Columns, from Ocean's depths that spring
And prop the roof of living stone,
Echoing the tempest's raging wing,
And the wild billows' ceaseless moan.

What are the works of human hands,
Compared with that majestic scene?
The baubles form'd by childish bands,
Of pliant sedge or withy green!

Vain is such pagan rite and prayer,
And holy mass alike is vain!
They gain no tidings of their heir,
From saint—or demon of the main.

THE

MILK-WHITE HOUND;

A Fairy Tale.

PART II.

'Twas on a soft and summer's morn,
When the sun casts its earliest beam;
When dew-drops hang on every thorn,
That like bright sparkling diamonds gleam;

Peel's lovely mistress in her bower,
Now shed the tender, bitter tear;
Then knelt and pray'd our Lady's power
A ruin'd mother's heart to cheer.

As low she sunk upon the ground,
And mourn'd her ravish'd joy and pride,—
Sudden a beauteous milk-white hound
Came gaily bounding to her side.

First gently round her feet it play'd,
Then on her couch delighted sprung,
To win her lily hand essay'd,
And lick'd it with soft fawning tongue.

No swan upon the silver lake
E'er shew'd a skin so white and fair;
It seem'd as though the snowy flake
Was wove to form its waving hair!

There was a meaning in its eyes,
As something she had seen before;
Which, for a moment, check'd her sighs,
And made her still caress it more.

In spacious hall or lofty tower,
Where'er she went throughout the day,
In shady walk or forest bower,
It never from her side would stray.

The sun had sunk amidst the waves,
And Night's deep veil was drawn around;
To spread his couch a charge she gave,
But, ah! no favourite there was found!

Can she, who for an only child
Has wept with all a mother's woe,
Be by such trivial cause beguiled,
As thus to let the tear-drops flow?

Yes!—for when, rising round the brim,
High swells the goblet's crystal tide,
A leaf will bid it over-swim,
And pour the drops adown its side!

And oft the mind, by sorrow wrung,
Will mourn o'er what a trifle seems,
That wakes some nerve too highly strung,
Or back recalls its early dreams.

The night is past—and rosy morn
Tips every wave with crimson light;
When, noiseless as on ether borne,
The favourite springs once more in sight!

Thus it, each morn throughout the year,
To hail its waking mistress flew;
Thus still, when night's last shades appear,
None knew the moment it withdrew!

Pages survey'd its form with awe,
And gentle maidens own'd their fear,
And bold attendants backward draw
When they observe it coming near.

They said, at times a whispering voice
Was heard to summon it away;
Then lo! sweet warblings would rejoice,
Or deep sad notes lament its stay.

The holy Priest his thoughts repress'd,
Nor would the lovely Lady chide;
Yet liked not such mysterious guest
Should ever thus attend her side.

But that high-gifted awful dame,
Who the unheeded warning sung,
Seem'd to rejoice whene'er it came,
And hail'd it in an unknown tongue.

Thus slow the lingering months had pass'd,
Lengthen'd by doubt, and care, and fear;
Till the remember'd day at last
Dawn'd to complete the seventh long year.

Joy once more reigns in Peel's proud halls,
But not a joy unmix'd with care;
They hope, ere Eve's last shadow falls,
To hail once more an infant heir.

There Stanley sat—his friends around
Strove with gay pledge his heart to cheer;
Then sudden stop to catch the sound
Of voice or step approaching near.

Enter a train of Ladies fair,
With looks that speak imperfect joy;
Stanley, come bless thy beauteous heir,
Though it be not a wish'd-for Boy!

The Sibyl bids—that holy rite,
With pious care, be quickly done;
Wait not, she cries, the shades of night—
Delay not till the set of sun!

Swift let the numerous tapers blaze!
And form around the sacred ring!
And loud the lofty anthem raise!
And water bear from hallowed spring!

Oh! think upon the past!—nor wait,
By sinful thoughts of pride beguiled!
The hour speeds on, decreed by fate—
Now gain—or lose—thy noble Child!

Though wild her words, none dare delay,
Or deem her half-spoke warning vain!
Ah! who so swiftly will obey
As those who smart from former pain?

How grand, how awful looks that pile,
Full glowing with the sun's last rays;
Whilst through each fretted vault and aisle
Beams of bright gold or silver blaze.

As the rich windows through the gloom,
Or tapers gleam round holy shrine;
Or censers, breathing sweet perfume,
In various lights and shadows shine;

Glancing on stole or flowing vest,
Armour and gems arrang'd with care;
For absent was not one high guest,
And every Monk and Nun was there.

Say, why is fix'd each anxious eye?
Why to one spot each thought seems bound?
Close to the font, with fear, they spy
The strangely beauteous, milk-white hound!

It wears a look of anxious care,
And seems to watch the sinking sun;
When in the lovely babe they bear,
And holy rites are now begun.

But sure, at every solemn close,
Is heard the sound of rushing wings;
And seems, as if slow whispering grows,
As softer notes the organ flings!

And sure increasing murmur runs
Behind yon lofty arch's shade;
And through those galleries, where the nuns
Oft join the holy strain to aid!

The Abbot, thrill'd with growing fear,
Trembles as by the font he stands;—
"Now bring the heir of Stanley near,"
He cries, and spreads his sacred hands!

Just as he seal'd the mystic rite,
And bless'd the babe with faltering tongue:
Before their awe-struck, wondering sight,
The hound upon the font has sprung!

From such pollution, strange and dread,
In vain they try that font to save;
Humbly the creature bow'd its head,
Then plunged into the holy wave.

The water flash'd in sparkling spray,
And pour'd around its crystal flood;
But when once more it tranquil lay,
A beauteous Boy amidst it stood!

His laughing blue eyes brightly beam
Through his thick curls of flaxen hair;
The lily on the rippling stream
Could not with his soft limbs compare!

Summer's most blooming fragrant rose
Lent to his cheek its brightest hue;
And his ripe lip, half open, glows,—
A cherry dipp'd in balmy dew!

What was that feeling, scarce repress'd—
That sudden tender, doubtful joy—
Which sprung in Stanley's noble breast,
When he beheld that lovely boy?

Whilst bold attendants silent stood,
Whose alter'd looks confess'd their fear,
He snatch'd him from the chilling flood,
And hail'd him with a Father's tear!

Then the prophetic dame arose,
And raised her wither'd hands on high;—
"Abbot, the mystic rite now close—
Nor mock the mysteries of the sky!

His be the Baptist's holy name,
For he by that blest rite is won!
Then, let him straight your homage claim—
Stanley!—receive thy princely Son!

His shall be courage, wisdom, grace,
His reign shall peace and comfort bring;
Bend low to him—ye noble race!
And hail with joy your future King!

Untouch'd, the Organ peal'd aloud,
And pour'd a melody divine;
And low the knightly banners bow'd,
Plac'd o'er each tomb and votive shrine!

Then sweet sad voices through the air
Breath'd a wild melancholy strain;
'Twas soft—yet seem'd to speak despair,
'Twas music—though the wail of pain!

Mourn, mourn, ye Elves!—the fated hour—
Your reign in Mona's isle is o'er!
Ye Fairies!—quit each rosy bower,
And seek a ruder northern shore!

Ye Gnomes and Sprites, that love to sail
Upon the Whirlwind's rushing wing;
And bid the piercing icy gale
Blast the sweet children of the Spring!—

Ye wandering phantoms, who delight
Through mouldering tombs and vaults to glide,
And at the silent noon of night
To stand the sinner's bed beside!—

Ye Dolkins, who with boding breath
  Strive to augment the heaving wave,
First lure the hapless wretch to death,
  Then wanton sport above his grave!—

Spirits of Ocean, Earth, and Air!
  Attend the call—the spell obey—
Instant to Staffa's cave repair—
  Ye lose the power, if ye delay!

'Tis said that, on fair Mona's shore,
  None since th' aërial train has seen,
Save one, who still the wren's form bore,
  And loves to hide 'mid holly green,

To her fair maids still homage pay,
  And offer, at her mystic stone,
Honey or milk, or flowerets gay—
  Yet shun to meet her if alone.

And still, when that dread day returns
  Which gave to Peel its rescued heir—
When bright the guarded watch-fire burns—
  And heroes revel free from care—

The fell Mauthe-douge (19)—a lingering gnome—
Enters, with livid gleaming eyes;
None e'er dare seek its hidden home,
For its rash finder—silent dies!

And still the crest of Stanley's line,
Who rule in Mona's isle, as King,
Is a young babe, whom bands entwine,
Borne by an eagle on the wing!

As clos'd the Bard his wondrous strain,
Loud plaudits gave the noble train;
Young knights wish'd they could raise the sail,
And favor'd by the summer's gale,
Each mighty cliff and cave explore
Of Mona's wild romantic shore.
And one, more bold, desir'd the sight
Of the Mauthe-douge—terrific sprite!
And many a wish for hound so fair,
Matrons and lovely Maids declare;
But Cover's holy Prior, who'd been
Silent spectator of the scene,

Now rose—and, as his hand he press'd,
With friendly air the Bard address'd:
When thus are us'd thy harp and voice,
They bid my inmost heart rejoice;
When moral truths his tales convey,
Ennobled is the Poet's lay:
But when our Church's praise is sung,
Laud ye his art—and laud his tongue!
Say—wilt thou grant the boon I ask,
Since 'tis no rude or wanton task,
But such as will awake the fire
Of Fancy, and thy notes inspire;—
A legend give, that shall impart
New vigour to each votary's heart,
When, at to-morrow's evening feast,
Again shall meet each honor'd guest!
Raymond, with smiles, the challenge took,
Though it was thought by some—a look
Of archness o'er his features stole,
As though he would some thought control;
But when he raised his beaming eye,
All such expression seem'd to fly,
And his clear voice of mellow tone
Seem'd tun'd by Music as her own!

Prais'd is the harp, and prais'd the song,
That may the warrior's fame prolong;
And pure and sacred is the lyre,
That would to virtuous deeds inspire:
But when Religion's praise is sung,
Blest is the hand—and blest the tongue!
To-morrow eve, at thy command,
An ancient Legend of our land
Shall shew, how first her heavenly smile
Beam'd o'er fair Albion's favor'd isle!—
He bow'd, and gracefully withdrew—
The folding doors then open flew,
And dance and song and banquet light
Ended the revel of the night.

TENTH DAY.

BRIGHT rose the sun, and spread his light
O'er trackless fields of spotless white;
Scarcely the dazzled eye can bear
To gaze upon the summits fair,
That, like bright sparkling diamonds, lie
Against the unclouded azure sky;
By snow, upon each branch sustain'd,
The fir has such circumference gain'd,
As like a lofty spire to stand,
Rais'd by the stroke of magic wand;
Oft sudden tinkling sounds are heard,
As springs from branch to branch a bird;
The ash and oak o'erloaded bend,
And many a bough is heard to rend;
Half chok'd with ice, the rivers roar
And force huge masses on the shore;

Yet even here, the youthful mind
Can a new source of pleasure find;
Some toil, with hands of crimson glow,
To mould a mighty man of snow;
With open mouth, and jetty eyes,
And limbs that mock all human size;
Whilst jocund laugh and loud applause
Each Lady to the window draws;
At once begins a merry game
Of snow-balls, thrown with dext'rous aim,
Some boldly stand—put to the rout,
Some stumbling run midst joyful shout;
Till clogg'd with snow—with wet half blind—
The noisy frolic is resign'd;
And each returns, all glowing warm,
To find, by contrast sweet, the charm
That manly sports, in field, afford
To pleasures of the social board:
Which female beauty deigns to grace,
Where courtesy retains its place;
And where the master's generous heart
And liberal hand perform their part.

When evening came, a whisper rose,
What story can the Bard disclose?

Some thought that such a solemn theme
Must quench sweet Fancy's brilliant beam,
Forgetful, that the brightest fire
That e'er did mortal's song inspire,
And crown'd the royal Poet's fame,
Caught from Religion's torch its flame.
Raymond appears—his lofty brow
Retains no trace of sorrow now;
Firm is his step—and his dark eye
Beams with a Poet's ecstacy!
Heighten'd by that bright mystic glow
The son of song can only know,
When high-wrought brain and hand and heart,
In union blest, sustain their part:
His harp he seiz'd, already strung,
The chords beneath his fingers rung,
And its clear prelude, loud but sweet,
Bade many a gentle bosom beat;
Now pour'd a rich and mellow swell,
Now into softer numbers fell,
Then join'd his voice, of deepest power,
To paint the orphan's sorrowing hour?

EDWIN,

A Saxon Legend.

PART I.

When dew drops hang on blooming thorn,
And deck with pearls the woodbine bower,
I love to hail the opening morn
Beside yon lonely ruin'd tower!

When Summer's sun has fired the air
With the bright glow of noon-tide day,
I drive my flock to shelter there,
And muse the sultry hours away!

I love each note of bird to hear,
That builds within its roofless hall;
And every flower to me is dear,
That blooms upon its mouldering wall!

To me 'tis sweet, at twilight's shade,
To wander 'neath those ancient trees;
There my forefathers' oft have stray'd,
There they have wooed the lingering breeze!

I'm told these were my father's lands,
That here they reign'd, in days of yore,
But they are reft by kindred hands,
And here there name is heard no more!

Oh, that some spirit had the power,
To raise me from this low employ!
Chase the dark clouds that round me lower,
And bring to light the Shepherd's Boy!

Be still,—be still!—my fluttering heart!—
Sure airy voices breathe my name!
They bid me from these shades depart—
They bid me seek the paths of fame!

I hear your call and I obey—
Ye speak to no degenerate Son!
By me, in battle's close array,
A crown—or grave—may yet be won!

Thus spake young Edwin (20) as he strode
With lengthen'd step the forest glade,
Where Derwent's crystal waters flow'd,
Now silvery bright—now lost in shade,

But who is he, that thus alone,
In rustic garb, is seen to roam?
Say—does he breathe that inward moan
O'er some lone roof, his native home?

No, 'tis fair Deira's princely heir!
Who thus at early dawn's first light,
Like eaglet from his nest will dare
To wing his unaccustom'd flight.

Though hid in shepherd's hut awhile,
From royal race 'twas his to spring;
For well ye know once Britain's isle
Was ruled by many a Saxon King.

His youthful form was light and tall,
His locks, of brightest flaxen hue,
In twining ringlets graceful fall,
His beaming eyes were heaven's own blue;

His open brow was lily fair,
Just mark'd by many a wandering vein;
And sure, that cheek must seem to wear
The rose unstain'd by sun or rain.

Onward he pass'd, yet look'd around,
And sometimes paus'd intent to hear;
But ne'er met direr cause of sound,
Than fluttering bird or rustling deer.

Deep in the centre of the wood
Beyond all others deem'd divine,
Thor's mighty temple lonely stood,
In silent solitude sublime.

No white-rob'd priest could there be found;
But still, at earliest dawn of day,
The blazing fires the altar crown'd,
And there the offer'd victim lay.

Dark, wild, and savage was the rite,
To please such idols dire decreed;
'Tis said, that oft at dead of night
Some captive wretch was doom'd to bleed!

Before the altar Edwin bow'd,
And breath'd a true, tho' erring, prayer,
When burst the roar of thunder loud,
And lurid lightning flash'd through air!

The altar's fire, which fiercely glow'd
In livid flames, now quivering stream'd—
In gleaming circles upward rode,
And o'er each grim-brow'd idol beam'd.

Instinct appear'd each form with life,
And seem'd to roll each glaring eye,
Woden rais'd high his bloody knife,
And the fell Sisters shudder'd by!

Untouch'd by mortal hand or stroke,
The crown of Thor was seen to fall;
Then rose a mighty cloud of smoke,
And spread around its sable pall.

And, borne upon the rising gale,
Loud shrieks were heard and warlike cries;
Rock, oak, and temple join'd the wail
That swept along the northern skies.

Thrill'd with deep awe, young Edwin rose,
And high and quick his heart-pulse beat;
He turns—the brazen doors unclose—
And a lance falls before his feet!

He grasps the weapon in his hand,
And fervent pours this solemn prayer:
O grant me, from my native land
The foes of her true gods to tear!

He spoke—sweet strains of music rung,
And, by the whispering breeze borne near,
Such heavenly melodies were sung
As ne'er before met British ear.

Ah, whither must my footsteps tend!
In suppliant tone, young Edwin cried,
An injur'd orphan to befriend—
Oh! point his path!—be ye his guide!

Celestial voices seem'd to hail,
Then gently chide the wanderer's stay;
Borne slow on southern skies they sail,
Then soft in distance die away.

Now brightly glow'd the risen sun,
And ne'er more welcome was his light
Than to his eyes, who had begun
By portents strange as these his flight.

The giant oaks, with arms outspread,
Cast their long shadows down the glade;
And scarce was mov'd one stately head
By the fresh breeze that round them play'd.

On mossy banks the dew-drops slept,
Or linger'd in the flowret's bell;
The birch her odorous pearlets wept,
And violets lent their fragrant smell.

The blossom'd thorn—the wild wood-rose—
Flung all their sweetness on the gale;
And round the ash the woodbine throws
Her rings, and hangs her clusters pale.

Perch'd on the forest's topmost bough,
Her matin song the wood-thrush sings;
The playful squirrel threats, and now
From tree to tree uninjured springs.

Their murmuring notes the stock-doves join,
Mix'd with the blackbird's mellow lay;
And where thick hazle boughs entwine,
Flies screaming loud the beauteous jay.

Crossing his path, the timid deer
Just pause and cast a glance behind;
Then start with wonder, mix'd with fear,
Then with swift feet outfly the wind.

And, where yon time-bleach'd riven oak
Stretches its naked arms on high,
With hoarse, deep, hollow, boding croak
A pair of sable ravens fly.

A woodman's hut, of rude logs piled,
Received at night the weary guest;
Coarse the repast, yet welcome smiled,
And spread his lowly place of rest.

'Twas form'd of russet fern alone,
A shaggy wolf-skin o'er it spread;
But rare such deep repose is known
On gilded couch or silken bed.

The early dawn his toil renews,
  But youthful hope gilds every thought;
He pass'd till fell soft twilight's dews,
  Then shelter 'neath a sheep-cote sought.

He shunn'd each stately hall and bower
  That in sequester'd valley lay;
But more he shrunk from lofty tower,
  That gloom'd upon his destin'd way.

No glittering goblet would he fill,
  He fled from revel gay and free—
Until he reach'd the gentle hill
  Which rises o'er the winding Lea.

Oh! 'twas a scene of beauty rare!
  For, mix'd with many a forest shade,
Lay verdant meadows, smiling fair,
  Where flocks and herds and coursers stray'd.

Compos'd of massy beams of wood,
  With tower and rude-carv'd gables crown'd,
A monarch's mighty palace stood—
  Strongly enclosed with moat around.

Here Redwold, lord of Anglia, reign'd,
Within no narrow bounds confin'd;
His foes his valiant arm restrain'd,
His subjects bless'd his bounteous mind.

Say, is there one who far could roam,
Then to his native haunts return—
Who has not hastened to his home,
And felt his rising bosom burn?

Yet in that very throb of joy—
Has he not paus'd, as though a fear
Whisper'd—can aught thy bliss destroy?
Lurks aught of pain or sorrow here?

Thus Edwin paus'd—he's reach'd the goal,
Yet still his lingering footsteps wait—
And doubt and pride assail his soul,
And bid him turn and quit the gate!

EDWIN,

A Saxon Legend.

PART II.

THE sun was sinking to the west,
And cast around a golden glow;
Will neither friend, nor stranger-guest—
This night my roof or banquet know?

Cried Redwold, as he smiling pass'd,
To share the evening feast of joy,
His eyes he on the portal cast—
And saw the graceful stranger boy!

Haste quickly thou, my trusty page,
And bid yon stripling to my board!
Who e'er saw want or feeble age
Neglected pass from Anglia's lord?

But sure, his form brings to my mind
Thoughts that with days long buried blend;
Sure, in his youthful face I find
Some traces of an ancient friend!

Low was the hall, but large and wide
On the broad hearth huge faggots blaz'd;
Two ample tables grac'd each side,
Across the end the king's was rais'd.

Coarse was the canopy of state,
And rudely carved the monarch's chair;
In rustic garb the pages wait,
But hospitality was there!

Though of uncover'd oak the board,
And plain the benches rais'd around;
'Twas with huge smoking dishes stored,
And mead and wine the goblets crown'd.

The wool, which from his flock was shorn,
Was stain'd with green and crimson dye;
That in a flowing robe was worn,
This scarcely reach'd below the thigh.

Rare fur, the prize of many a chace
Through wood and wild, his garments bind;
His neck and arms gold chains embrace,
Thongs with gold clasps his buskins twined.

But Redwold's was that noble mien,
That native dignity of soul,
That to be lov'd need but be seen,
Had but to look and to control!

Close by his side he plac'd his guest,
And help'd him to his choicest cheer;
Nor question ask'd, nor answer press'd,
Until of food the board was clear.

For when the hospitable door
Was to a stranger-guest spread wide,
His courtesy was deem'd but poor
Who into traveller's counsels pryed.

Then all unsought, as Edwin pour'd
His sorrow on the monarch's ear,
With anxious care his aid implor'd,
With stifled sigh and scarce-check'd tear.

His hand the noble Redwold took,
And, whilst his eye-balls flash'd with ire,
Exclaim'd—I never yet forsook
The son, when I had lov'd the sire!

Then wait but till thy youthful arm
Has strength to bear thy father's shield;
And in the throng of battle warm
Thy hand thy father's sword can wield!

He paus'd, as though some gentle thought
Rose in his heart's most secret spring;
For he had been sweet mercy taught—
The first converted Christian King!

I will a solemn message send
To Ethred, and by every law
That should bind guardian, kinsman, friend,
Urge him from Deira to withdraw.

Thy wish is gain'd, thy suit has sped,
If yielding answer is return'd;
If not—his blood rest on his head
Who has such friendly warning spurn'd!

But though with threat and furious scorn
Did Ethred's stern reply abound,
With mind scarce ruffled was it borne,
For Edwin had a treasure found!

'Twas Edelburga, royal maid—
The noble Redwold's darling child,
Who with the honour'd stranger stray'd,
And on his vows 'midst blushes smiled.

No fairer maid did Albion grace,
Though Albion's maids were ever fair;
E'en yet, in some high lines, we trace
The Saxon eye—the Saxon hair.

No father's frown their love repress'd,
Nor chid the royal stripling's stay;
But there he dwelt—a favour'd guest—
Till four short years had pass'd away.

Then Envy rose, with venom'd breath,
And whisper'd, as in friendly care,
That 'twas agreed, at Ethred's death,
Redwold should reign—and not the heir!

Oh, who can paint the varied pangs
That Edwin's faithful bosom wrung?
Now wrath and scorn strike deep their fangs,
And from fond love despair now sprung!

'Tis midnight's hour, and all is still,
Save the deep boom of water-fowl ([21]),
Save the soft trickling of the rill,
Or the sad note of boding owl!

The moon spread round her silver light,
Which scarcely pierced the forest's shade;
But o'er the lawn shed lustre bright,
And on the winding river play'd.

Upon a rude and mossy stone,
That lay the river's bank beside,
Edwin sat musing, sad, alone,
And seem'd to watch its gentle tide.

Oh, must my wanderings never end!
Must I then quit this much-lov'd home!
Deceived by him I deem'd my friend,
My hopes, my love, my all o'erthrown!

Why was I spar'd in that dire wood,
When angry gods around me shone!
Ah, why not shed my vital blood,
Upon that deep-stain'd altar stone!

Did secret guilt debase my sires,
To rouse to wrath those forms divine?
Here then, in mercy, point your fires!
Your victim take, and end their line!

He spake—no blazing flash replied,
He sigh'd—and turn'd him from the flood;
And wondering saw that, by his side,
A tall majestic figure stood!

Snow-white the robe which round him flow'd,
And rich the girdle that it bound;
His hood of brightest crimson glow'd,
Crimson the cloak that wrapt him round.

The marks of age his forehead bore,
But there sat dignity and grace;
Pale was his cheek, his tresses hoar,
But heavenly meekness deck'd his face.

But the expression of his eyes!
The youth had ne'er seen aught before,
Which thus could every sense surprise,
And bid him wonder and adore!

I ask not why, at this still hour,
I find thee here—distress'd—alone—
I read each passion and its power,
To me thy inmost heart is known!

Rash was thy prayer, but it arose
From faith in those thou deem'st divine;
Thou shalt stand first amongst their foes—
Thy hand destroy their proudest shrine!

Thou deem'st thyself a wanderer lone,
But thou shalt lead a mighty train—
Join a new nation to thine own—
And numerous subjects bless thy reign!

Believe not what that slanderer saith,
To-morrow claim thy destin'd bride!
Redwold has pledged a christian's faith,
And in that pledge thou may'st confide!

In that pure faith thou shalt believe—
  In thee its mighty power be shown!
This is the pledge thou shalt receive,
  And then its influence thou wilt own!

Behold this Cross! the image there
  Hangs emblem of thy Saviour slain!
This sign another hand shall bear,
  Then deem not thou the warning vain.

Where, with thy peers assembled round,
  Thou seek'st the gods thou deem'st of power;
Just as the altar shall be crown'd—
  Then is the blest, the fated hour!

Firm be thy heart, and firm thy hand!
  Pause not till that high deed be done!
Though morn dawn o'er a heathen land,
  Christians shall hail the setting sun!

No sword must strike—no blood must flow—
  No beast or man with life must part—
His offering is faith's holy glow,
  His altar is the contrite heart!

Though gorgeous temples will arise,
And gifts be made to many a shrine;
Mercy shall gain the heavenly prize,
Pure truth shall waft to realms divine!

He spoke—the crucifix he rais'd—
A lambent glory round it spread—
As Edwin, all astonished, gaz'd,
His hand he laid upon his head!

Strange was the thrill that o'er him pass'd,
As that mysterious hand he felt;
Awe-struck his eyes he downward cast,
Whilst lowly at his feet he knelt.

Gone was the hand—he look'd around—
No object met his ear or sight;
Save the calm river's soothing sound,
Save the full moon's soft-silver'd light.

EDWIN,

A Saxon Legend.

PART III.

THESE awful mysteries, when reveal'd,
From Redwold joyful credence find;
For, though deep in his heart conceal'd,
Doubts oft had wrung the father's mind.

O Edelburga! wilt thou prove
Firm in thy faith? he often sigh'd—
Canst thou resist the pleas of love,
Or view thy husband as thy guide?

But now with hope he joins their hands,
And names the next the bridal day;
I dare not pause, when heavenly bands
And guardian spirits point the way.

Call in the guests, and place the feast;
And deck the Bride in garments fair;
Soon as the sun shall gild the east,
Hither bid all my train repair!

And let the high-soul'd valiant youth,
Who seeks to win a soldier's name,
Join in the cause of faith and truth,
And fight for Edwin's rightful claim!

High was the feast, and rich the cheer,
And costly robes did all array;
The Bride to all the land was dear,
The youth to glory led the way.

But, ere the hour of parting came,
Which often dims the brightest eye;
'Twas told, a dark-rob'd solemn train
Were with slow steps approaching nigh.

Heralds!—go forth—they must not wait—
Ask not what message now they bring!
None must this day approach my gate
But shall be feasted as a king.

Then bid them welcome to my home,
The feast of joy and love to share;
Whilst high the sparkling goblets foam,
And mirth and song shall chase their care.

Thus Redwold spake, with smiling face,
As seated with his nobles round;
Enter'd they in, with solemn grace,
And straight a ready welcome found.

There was a dignity of mien—
An air, that spoke of high command—
O'er all the ancient person seen,
Of him who led the stranger band!

Redwold, I thee no message bear,
But grateful thanks and praise alone;
Lead me to Deira's youthful heir—
To him my purpose must be shown!

Whilst Edwin's eye upon him dwelt,
As though the reverend priest he knew;
Before him low the stranger knelt,
Then from his robe a crown he drew!

Hail! to the son of him, who long
Over fair Deira justly reign'd!
In battle be thine arm as strong—
In peace thy hand, like his, unstain'd!

Plenty and joy and health be thine!
Then rising, as these words he said,
He bade his train their blessings join,
And plac'd the crown upon his head!

Laud we the gods, who thus have rais'd
Our rightful king to fill the throne!
Be Thor and Friga ever prais'd!
And offerings heap their altar stone!

He spake—loud thunder shook the skies,
The heathens hail the pledge divine;
But it appear'd to Redwold's eyes
A confirmation of the sign!

What rapture Edwin's bosom fill'd,
When he his native home survey'd!
What joy—those turrets to rebuild!
How soothing seem'd that wood's deep shade!

In peace and love the year has flown,
Mingled with only tender care;
When blazing fires and shouts make known
The birth of the much wish'd-for heir.

The feast was laid with pomp and pride,
And all around was mirth and joy;
But Edelburga softly sigh'd,
Whilst gazing on her lovely boy.

Why does the tear-drop dim the sight
Of her who late so gaily smil'd?
She mourns—no holy Christian rite
Must hail or bless her darling child!

But when she found, with pagan prayer,
Her babe must to the shrine be borne;
Whilst bloody offerings priests prepare,
How was the mother's bosom torn!

Now, to the Temple bear my son!
With cheerful voice, the Father cries;
There let each mystic rite be done,
With all the pomp of sacrifice!

But, as he spoke and wav'd his hand,
Whilst all his guests rose to obey,
Instant the portals wide expand,
And give a long procession way!

Strange was the garb—foreign the face—
Of all who form'd that numerous train;
They come with solemn steady pace,
Unmov'd by mirth or trifles vain!

But Edwin—when he cast his eyes
On him who stepp'd that band before—
Was struck with wonder and surprise,
To see the robes the strangers wore!

And nearer as that stranger drew,
His bosom throbb'd with sudden awe;
For 'twas the form which met his view
When he that warning vision saw!

But though the robe, the form, the face,
To Edwin's sight appear'd the same;
He found not that mysterious grace,
Those eyes which beam'd with lambent flame.

This—was a form of mortal clay,
Though stamp'd with high and noble air;
That—seem'd from purer realms to stray,
For heavenly love was imag'd there!

But though a mortal met his sight,
High the commission that he bore;
He came—to pour true Christian light
On Britain's long-benighted shore!

He came—her mysteries to unfold—
To raise the thoughts to realms above;
Of all the Father's mercy told,
Of all the Saviour's boundless love!

He show'd—not purity alone
Might hope to rise to realms divine;
But that repentance might atone,
Nor deepest guilt despairing pine!

He spoke of mercy, comfort, peace,
Till every bosom seem'd to melt;
All earthly hoes and wishes cease,
As lowly round his feet they knelt.

His hand he plac'd on Edwin's head,
And rais'd a crucifix on high;
Behold the sign!—he firmly said—
Read here the mandate of the sky!

From mighty Rome, this sign I bring—
Which once before has met thy view!
Sawest thou no vision?—Deira's King!
To prove the Messenger is true?

One moment fixt was Edwin's sight,
Whilst awe and wonder chain'd his tongue;
Then, with a burst of pure delight,
He spoke, as to the gate he sprung—

Bless'd be the hour—and bless'd the sign—
That thus to this fair land has given
The knowledge of those laws divine,
And read to us the will of Heaven!

Hence, with those idol gods of stone!
Those blood-demanding demons dire!
Straight be their temples overthrown!
And instant quench'd their altar's fire!

The flame was caught by all around,
And every valiant heart beat high;
Hurl'd be the temple to the ground!
Was now the universal cry.

But when they reach'd that gloomy vale
Where Thor's majestic structure stood,
There rose a wild unearthly wail,
That seem'd to freeze their vital blood!

Each oak, where Druid erst had vow'd,
Flung wide its branches to the gale;
And a dense, lurid, low-hung cloud
Seem'd round the lofty dome to sail!

'Twas said—that many a warlike form
Was seen to threaten midst its gloom,
And phantoms, such as ride the storm,
Appear'd to weep its coming doom!

All paus'd, as struck with sudden dread,
But Edwin sprung the gate before;
Be all their vengeance on my head!
He cried, and flung the lance he bore.

The heaven-presented weapon flew,
And quiver'd in the altar-stone;
That low hung cloud then round him drew,
As rose a long-drawn fearful groan.

Though peals of thunder burst around,
And lurid lightning fir'd the air;
Yet when it ceas'd, their King was found
Standing full-arm'd, uninjur'd there.

Hurl'd from his throne, with form defac'd,
The shatter'd idol Thor was laid!
Priest, peer, and peasant, instant haste
Their Sovereign's pious toil to aid.

Rent was the roof—cleft were the walls—
As if by more than human hand;
Till with loud crash the Temple falls,
And spreads its ruins o'er the land!

The priest of Rome—Paulinus stood—
Till all that mighty pile lay low;
Then turn'd to where the crystal flood
Of Derwent's gentle waters flow.

Hail to the Church's favor'd son!
Endow'd with courage, strength, and zeal;
Now be that holy rite begun—
That is of Christian faith the seal!

How blest!—how solemn was the sight
Of thousands come that rite to share!
Paulinus view'd it with delight,
And pour'd to Heaven a grateful prayer.

O'er them arose no lofty nave,
No rich carv'd vase could there be found;
The font—was the clear living wave,
The Temple—the fair scene around!

And that fair scene still bears the name—
Still as Godmundham is it known,
Though not a trace its site proclaim,
But mighty heaps of mouldering stone!

And still, 'tis said, midst wintry storms,
O'er Woden's croft dim phantoms sail;
And that aerial warrior forms
Sweep slow down Thor's enchanting vale!

When ceas'd the Bard, attention hung
On all the wonders which he sung;
And for some moments silence reign'd
As though each thought and tongue were chain'd.
Nobles fear'd first the pause to break,
Lest they some heresy should speak;
And many a youthful knight confess'd,
Within the secret of his breast,
That 'twas a subject far too high
For judgment such as his to try.
Yet Edwin's love could to his heart
A throb of sympathy impart,
And many a tear, and many a sigh,
That sprung from beauty's breast and eye,
Prov'd that the youthful wanderer's woe
Had found the balm they could bestow,
If he, in later times, had come
To share their banquet and their home:
For when did manly courage find
A foe in gentle woman-kind?
But Cover's holy Prior arose—
Raymond, we never yet were foes,
Though I have sometimes thought thy song
Too tender for the youthful throng;

And oft have fear'd it might impart
Earth's sinful pleasures to the heart,
And lead some heaven-devoted maid
To shun the Cloister's hallow'd shade;
But this high song I must commend,
It proves thou art the Church's friend;
Though, perhaps, too much of praise it gave
To him who was an Idol's slave,
And seem'd to think his erring rite
Heaven in its mercy did requite:
Now take the guerdon thou hast gain'd,
And whilst 'tis on thy hand retain'd,
Let it this hint to Memory bring;
He spake—and gave a costly Ring!

Trinian, with smiles, address'd the Bard—
Accept this pledge of my regard,
The thanks which, from a grateful heart,
A tender Parent can impart
For all thy lessons to his Son;
But ere the banquet is begun,
Explain to these fair curious dames,
The meaning of those idol names,

Which thou hast woven in thy song;—
Instant around the Bard they throng,
And freed from all their former fear,
Pour rapturous plaudits in his ear;
Till summon'd was each noble guest,
To share the cheerful evening feast.

ELEVENTH DAY.

The morning meal is pass'd and done,
And preparations are begun
For all the party, high and fair,
To Bolton's Castle to repair,
With its kind Lord the time to spend,
Till Twelfth-night bring the Revel's end;
When Nappa's hall shall boast a sport (*)
That lately had been shown at Court;
This some in whispers sly unfold,
Then add the wish—it be not told;
The secret how well kept—proclaim
Ye who dwell much with gentle dame!

Bright shone the sun upon the snow,
And cast around a dazzling glow;

Nobles and youthful Knights proceed
On courser proud, or warlike steed,
Rein'd in to prance and curvet high,
To catch some gentle fair one's eye,
Who would, from curtain'd litter, peep (*)
To see how he his seat could keep;
For manly graces, well we deem,
Are held by maids in high esteem.
In a clos'd waggon, singing gay,
Came a young band in warm array,
Whose jocund, laughing songs declare
They were not the least happy there;
Whilst some on well-train'd palfreys rode,
Who mov'd as pleas'd to bear such load.

A cordial welcome soon they found,
Plenty and social mirth abound.
When closed the eve, the splendid ball
Awoke the echoes of the hall;
The galliard first each form displays,
Then twines the swifter gayer maze,
Then the slow step of rigadoon
Is graceful pac'd to solemn tune;
Till in one general dance they blend,
Which lasts, till tired, the sport they end.

High the applause the damsels gain'd
Who had the different parts sustain'd;
But 'twas agreed—not any there
With Blanch and Glanville could compare.

Who shall describe the banquet spread,
To which the noble dames were led;
They, perhaps, could tell of dainties fine,
Of pastry rich, and sparkling wine;
But though well fill'd with plenteous board,
Sure small the joy it could afford
To him, who placed his fair beside,
Met not one glance that seem'd to chide,
Though many a vow, warm, pure, and dear,
He breath'd in no unwilling ear.
The feast remov'd, it was agreed
That song and music should succeed;
And whilst the wassail cup went round,
Each strain indulgent listeners found,
For all who hail'd that festal hour
Felt in full force the social power;
And sure no lovely dame would chide
Those who, the least successful, tried
The poet's gentle art to prove,
And sung the praise of War and Love!

Raymond was called—but Trinian cried,
Upon this challenge I decide;
If he first wake the magic string,
How shall another dare to sing?
No, let the feeble warblers fly,
Ere the lark rises to the sky!
Let the sweet wren and mavis join,
Ere Philomela's note divine
Fills every bosom with delight,
And smooths the dusky brow of night!
Come thou, my friend! who far hast been,
And many a distant land hast seen,—
I joy to meet thee, thus restor'd,
And hid in myrtle wreaths thy sword!
Give us once more the bridal lay,
First heard upon that happy day,
When, captive to fair Ellen's charms,
Thou left'st the ruder joy of arms—
The strain thy Father's Bard then sung,
With wine-wet lip, and merry tongue!
The jovial Noble, smiling, bow'd,
Then rais'd his manly voice aloud,
And call'd on youth and maiden fair
In the full chorus part to bear!

THE BRIDAL SONG.

Oh, gay is the morning, and bright shines the sun,
And long is the course which to-day he will run;
And as fair, bright, and long, happy, joyful, and gay,
Be the life of the fair one who marries to-day!

The night was all stormy, the sky was o'ercast,
And the voice of the brownie was heard on the blast;
But, at first dawn of morning, all gloom fled away,
As shall grief from her bosom who marries to-day!

For it is not the shepherd who wanders the hill,
It is not the maiden who toils at the mill,
It is not the outlaw who seeks for his prey,
Or the damsel he bore off that marries to-day.

No, 'tis power, valour, goodness, 'tis heart, hand and mind,
Which to birth, beauty, sweetness, in one shall be join'd;
'Tis Lord Edward, the hero, yet gentle as May,
Who the fair heir of Morven shall marry to-day!

Then come, brother bards, to the bridal repair!
Ye can feast with the warrior, and sing to the fair;
For ne'er blest was the bridal, the feast never gay,
Where the true sons of song did not welcome the day!

When done—Now drink her health! he cried,
For twenty years she has been my bride,
And not a better wish I know
On all these fair ones to bestow—
Than that, at such a distant year,
They still may be as kind, as dear!

Next—to the virginal's sweet string,
A gentle dame was called to sing;
With soft, low voice, and downcast eyes,
She gave the history of sighs—
Some deem'd the words the thoughts express'd
Long cherished in her inmost breast!

SIGHS.

There is a sigh—that half suppress'd
  Seems scarce to heave the bosom fair;
It rises from the spotless breast,
  The first faint dawn of tender care.

There is a sigh—so soft, so sweet,
  It breathes not from the lip of woe;
'Tis heard, where conscious lovers meet,
  Whilst yet untold young passions glow.

There is a sigh—short, deep, and strong,
  That on the lip of rapture dies;
It floats mild Evening's shade along,
  When meet the fond consenting eyes.

There is a sigh—that speaks regret,
  Yet seems scarce conscious of its pain;
It tells of bliss remember'd yet,
  Of bliss that ne'er must wake again.

There is a sigh—that deeply breath'd,
Bespeaks the bosom's secret woe;
It says, the flowers that Love had wreath'd
Are wither'd ne'er again to blow.

There is a sigh—that slowly swells,
Then deeply breathes its load of care;
It speaks, that in that bosom dwells
That last, worst pang—fond Love's despair.

High the applause the Lady gain'd,
Though tears on some fair cheeks remain'd.

A Knight—in manhood's hardiest prime—
Whose youth had pass'd in Eastern clime,
Raised a bold song, of distant date,
Which mourn'd some mighty nation's fate;
Perchance, fair Greece! it was a lay
Sung on the eve of battle day,
In the last hour that thou wert free,
Ere Slavery's night fell dark on thee!

THE WARRIOR'S SONG.

Fill high the bowl—'tis perhaps the last
The kindred Warriors e'er may drain!
Oh, when to-morrow's fight is past,
How few to pledge it may remain!

Fill high the bowl—'tis perhaps the last
That Beauty's hand may yield to thine!
Oh, when it o'er her lip has pass'd,
It gives a joy more sweet than wine!

Fill high the bowl—'tis perhaps the last
That will beneath this roof be crown'd!
Soon the wild breeze, that murmurs past,
May sweep its ruin'd wall around!

Fill high the bowl—'tis perhaps the last
In which we hail our Father's fame!
Oh, when 'tis by our children pass'd,
May added glories gild their name!

And can thy fate, poor blighted flower!
Draw the soft tear from Beauty's eye?
Thy longest date is but an hour,
Thy fragrant charm a passing sigh!

But long the woes of blighted love
On the pure faithful heart must prey,
The sudden pang—the deep throb prove,
Till life and memory fade away.

And genius slighted—spurn'd—oppress'd—
Oft seeks for friendly aid in vain,
Till wrung—degraded—wild—distress'd—
Distraction seize the fine-wrought brain!

Then whisper, Beauty's brightest charm
Is the sweet smile by Pity given,
The drooping heart of Love to warm,
And raise the Poet's soul to heaven!

They ceas'd—then mingled in the crowd,
As though o'ercome by plaudits loud;

In blushes dyed—she wav'd her hand
To a tall youth from Scotia's land,
And bade him in his song declare,
What tales were told to ladies there:
One moment dimm'd was Donald's eye,
His bosom heav'd a stifled sigh,
Then rose his voice of mellow power,
To sing the soldier's parting hour.

THE SOLDIER'S FAREWELL.

Oh! turn again that bonny brow,
And ance mair raise that azure e'e,
An' smile, thou dew-ripe rosy mou',
An' cheer the heart sae true to thee!

Lang shall that smile's saft dimply play,
That tender gleam o' tearful light,
Cheer the hot march in sultry day,
Or 'guile the watch in wint'ry night.

And can thy fate, poor blighted flower!
Draw the soft tear from Beauty's eye?
Thy longest date is but an hour,
Thy fragrant charm a passing sigh!

But long the woes of blighted love
On the pure faithful heart must prey,
The sudden pang—the deep throb prove,
Till life and memory fade away.

And genius slighted—spurn'd—oppress'd—
Oft seeks for friendly aid in vain,
Till wrung—degraded—wild—distress'd—
Distraction seize the fine-wrought brain!

Then whisper, Beauty's brightest charm
Is the sweet smile by Pity given,
The drooping heart of Love to warm,
And raise the Poet's soul to heaven!

They ceas'd—then mingled in the crowd,
As though o'ercome by plaudits loud;

In blushes dyed—she wav'd her hand
To a tall youth from Scotia's land,
And bade him in his song declare,
What tales were told to ladies there:
One moment dimm'd was Donald's eye,
His bosom heav'd a stifled sigh,
Then rose his voice of mellow power,
To sing the soldier's parting hour.

THE SOLDIER'S FAREWELL.

Oh! turn again that bonny brow,
And ance mair raise that azure e'e,
An' smile, thou dew-ripe rosy mou',
An' cheer the heart sae true to thee!

Lang shall that smile's saft dimply play,
That tender gleam o' tearful light,
Cheer the hot march in sultry day,
Or 'guile the watch in wint'ry night.

And can thy fate, poor blighted flower!
Draw the soft tear from Beauty's eye?
Thy longest date is but an hour,
Thy fragrant charm a passing sigh!

But long the woes of blighted love
On the pure faithful heart must prey,
The sudden pang—the deep throb prove,
Till life and memory fade away.

And genius slighted—spurn'd—oppress'd—
Oft seeks for friendly aid in vain,
Till wrung—degraded—wild—distress'd—
Distraction seize the fine-wrought brain!

Then whisper, Beauty's brightest charm
Is the sweet smile by Pity given,
The drooping heart of Love to warm,
And raise the Poet's soul to heaven!

They ceas'd—then mingled in the crowd,
As though o'ercome by plaudits loud;

In blushes dyed—she wav'd her hand
To a tall youth from Scotia's land,
And bade him in his song declare,
What tales were told to ladies there:
One moment dimm'd was Donald's eye,
His bosom heav'd a stifled sigh,
Then rose his voice of mellow power,
To sing the soldier's parting hour.

THE SOLDIER'S FAREWELL.

Oh! turn again that bonny brow,
And ance mair raise that azure e'e,
An' smile, thou dew-ripe rosy mou',
An' cheer the heart sae true to thee!

Lang shall that smile's saft dimply play,
That tender gleam o' tearful light,
Cheer the hot march in sultry day,
Or 'guile the watch in wint'ry night.

And can thy fate, poor blighted flower!
Draw the soft tear from Beauty's eye?
Thy longest date is but an hour,
Thy fragrant charm a passing sigh!

But long the woes of blighted love
On the pure faithful heart must prey,
The sudden pang—the deep throb prove,
Till life and memory fade away.

And genius slighted—spurn'd—oppress'd—
Oft seeks for friendly aid in vain,
Till wrung—degraded—wild—distress'd—
Distraction seize the fine-wrought brain!

Then whisper, Beauty's brightest charm
Is the sweet smile by Pity given,
The drooping heart of Love to warm,
And raise the Poet's soul to heaven!

They ceas'd—then mingled in the crowd,
As though o'ercome by plaudits loud;

In blushes dyed—she wav'd her hand
To a tall youth from Scotia's land,
And bade him in his song declare,
What tales were told to ladies there:
One moment dimm'd was Donald's eye,
His bosom heav'd a stifled sigh,
Then rose his voice of mellow power,
To sing the soldier's parting hour.

THE SOLDIER'S FAREWELL.

Oh! turn again that bonny brow,
And ance mair raise that azure e'e,
An' smile, thou dew-ripe rosy mou',
An' cheer the heart sae true to thee!

Lang shall that smile's saft dimply play,
That tender gleam o' tearful light,
Cheer the hot march in sultry day,
Or 'guile the watch in wint'ry night.

And can thy fate, poor blighted flower!
Draw the soft tear from Beauty's eye?
Thy longest date is but an hour,
Thy fragrant charm a passing sigh!

But long the woes of blighted love
On the pure faithful heart must prey,
The sudden pang—the deep throb prove,
Till life and memory fade away.

And genius slighted—spurn'd—oppress'd—
Oft seeks for friendly aid in vain,
Till wrung—degraded—wild—distress'd—
Distraction seize the fine-wrought brain!

Then whisper, Beauty's brightest charm
Is the sweet smile by Pity given,
The drooping heart of Love to warm,
And raise the Poet's soul to heaven!

They ceas'd—then mingled in the crowd,
As though o'ercome by plaudits loud;

In blushes dyed—she wav'd her hand
To a tall youth from Scotia's land,
And bade him in his song declare,
What tales were told to ladies there:
One moment dimm'd was Donald's eye,
His bosom heav'd a stifled sigh,
Then rose his voice of mellow power,
To sing the soldier's parting hour.

THE SOLDIER'S FAREWELL.

Oh! turn again that bonny brow,
And ance mair raise that azure e'e,
An' smile, thou dew-ripe rosy mou',
An' cheer the heart sae true to thee!

Lang shall that smile's saft dimply play,
That tender gleam o' tearful light,
Cheer the hot march in sultry day,
Or 'guile the watch in wint'ry night.

Tho' far thy faithful soldier roam,
An' mickle pain and hardship dree;
His inmost soul shall live—their home,
His heart of hearts, their mirror be.

He paus'd—and loud applauses rung;
For, though 'twas in the Scottish tongue,
It wak'd a nerve in many a breast,
That secret sympathy confess'd;
Than Nappa's lord, none felt it more,
But when the first keen throb was o'er,
His hand he press'd, and smiling said—
Thou hast the youth to battle led,
Now give—to bid our bosoms burn—
The story of his glad return.

THE SOLDIER'S RETURN.

Rise, rise, thou fair star! from thy home in the wave,
And enlighten the path of the gentle and brave;
From the mountain's wild summit, and heath-cover'd fell,
Oh, rise! and each phantom, each danger expel!

Oh, rise! the return of the heroes to hail;
For hark! the glad summons is borne on the gale;
The pibroch's loud triumph sounds sweet from afar,
And the bugle's clear echo 's return'd by the scar.

As soft o'er the mountains are pour'd thy pure rays,
Gay waves the lov'd tartan, the light plumage plays,
Oh! await not their march down the wild rocky dell,
Ere the eye of true love on its lov'd one may dwell!

Oh, star of the north! where thy bright beams are spread,
Thy chieftains thy sons to the battle have led;
But ne'er did thy rays show the field of their shame,
For bright and unfading, like thee, glows their fame!

All join to praise the patriot love,
Which Donald's artless ballads prove;
Than Raymond, none could share it more,
He too had travers'd Scotland o'er;
He lov'd her dark pine-shaded woods,
He lov'd her wildly-rushing floods,
He lov'd her lakes, her mountains blue,
Her heather bells impearl'd with dew;
But more he priz'd that awful light,
Lent to her sages' gifted sight!
That source, alas! of ceaseless woe,
The gift—the coming ill to know!
Trinian, who every thought could trace,
Mark'd the expression of his face,
And saw, in his bright kindling eye,
The beams of waking poesy.
He asks his song—the Bard complies—
The harp in softest numbers sighs,
Like those sweet notes, that, o'er the wave,
Sing the sole requiem of the brave,
When mermaids tune their breathing shells
In ocean's deep-hid coral cells;

Whilst, lull'd round Mona's lonely isle,
He smooths his billows to a smile;
And scarcely lets the dashing spray
Break the lov'd music of that lay.

THE DYING LOVER.

How soft and calm the o'erclouded moon
O'er yonder lonely valley sleeps;
And at her solemn midnight noon,
Stream rock and wood in silence steeps!

But oh, pale moon! what ray of thine
Can buried happiness restore;
Or bid a wounded heart, like mine,
With grief's keen tortures throb no more!

On yon low tomb, beside the stream,
The last abode of love and care;
She sheds her pure, her latest beam,
As though she lov'd to linger there.

The stream scarce murmurs as it flows,
And whispering sighs the balmy gale;
Oh, sad that note of warbler flows,
Each peaceful star of night to hail!

Blest spirit of my only love!
Behold'st thou aught beneath the skies?
Can human tears thy pity move?
Dost thou regard a mortal's sighs?

If in thy power, pure spirit, come,
And once more bless my anxious sight;
Quit the dark mansion of the tomb,
And guide me to the realms of light!

My prayer is heard—the boon is given—
I see the grave its jaws expand;
I see her slowly rise tow'rds heaven,
Whilst beckoning waves her snowy hand!

The life-blood curdles round my heart—
Dim shadows veil my closing eyes—
I come—my love! no more to part,
And, wing'd with joy, my spirit flies!

What is that impulse of the mind,
That nameless feeling most refin'd,
Which bids our purest pleasures flow
From sympathy with tales of woe?
Does it, as some aver, arise,
Because it bids us higher prize
The various treasures we possess,
And triumph in our own success!
No, it springs from a higher source—
Seest thou yon river's rapid course,
That through the fertile valley winds,
And freshens every spot it finds?
At first, it rose a slender rill,
Which other brooks conspir'd to fill,
Till its vast flood at last finds rest
In ocean's all-receiving breast:
Thus 'tis decreed—when in the mind
Some chord is touch'd which loves mankind,
More and more strong its force is felt,
Till selfish wishes seem to melt
Into that philanthropic glow
Which sheds its warmth on all below;

And, in its pleasure pure, has given
Sweet foretaste of the joys of heaven!

Thus Trinian spake, with air benign—
In kind applause, the band all join
To thank the bard, whose lofty flight
Had clos'd with such meet thoughts the night.

TWELFTH DAY.

Frost-bound remain'd the crested snow,
Unmelted by the sun's faint glow;
But when their warmth the chimneys spread,
Dissolves upon the roof of lead;
Till stopp'd by the keen midnight blast,
At every spout, collecting fast,
Huge knobs and grotesque scrolls depend,
And rugged crystal spikes descend;
And cased by many an icy mass,
Bolton's high tower seems form'd of glass.
But, from each window of the hall,
A cheerful light is seen to fall;
From fires, with huge oak-logs supplied,
That Winter's sternest frown defied:
And if we judge by voice of mirth
Heard from around that social hearth,
We sure must deem cold had no power
On pleasures of that breakfast hour.

Need we the various sports pursue—
The works of those who had nought to do
But wile the cheerful hours away,
Till plac'd the banquet ere noon-day?
Full was the feast, and rich the cheer,
Such as befitted noble peer
Before such honor'd guests to place
As now did Bolton Castle grace.
When clos'd the hospitable rite,
It was agreed, ere fell the night,
And torches bright began to burn,
All should to Nappa Hall return,
To share in some such sport or play
As all partake of on Twelfth Day.

Arriv'd and dress'd—'tis straight agreed,
All must to the great hall proceed!
But when the doors were open laid,
Such wondrous changes were display'd,
As seem'd the work of magic wand,
Or some gay dream of fairy land!
In rising circles, seats extend—
Save where, toward the lower end,

The ceiling of that spacious room
Is chang'd to a star-spangled dome,
Which sheds a soft and silver glow
Upon the lovely scene below:
For though, undeck'd by fragrant flower,
So gay appears that shady bower;
And all those rocks, with bushes crown'd,
Cast such a vernal air around,
Seems as though, of his rage beguil'd,
Stern Winter through his hollies smil'd!

First come the notes of music sweet,
Then the gay trip of nimble feet;
And now appears a youthful maid,
In light and glittering robe array'd;
Her waist by costly gems confin'd,
Her locks by silken flowers entwin'd,
Her slender feet, of snowy hue,
Cross'd o'er by sandal bands of blue;
Whilst, in her soft and lily hand,
She waves a polish'd ivory wand;
All knew sweet Blanch of Bolton's tongue,
As she Spring's fairy banquet sung!

THE BANQUET OF SPRING.

Elves and fairies! who delight
To dance around in airy ring;
Haste—to share the revel bright,
'Tis the banquet of the Spring!

Snowy lilies of the vale,
Twin'd, are for your table spread,
Propp'd by the tall primrose pale,
O'er the fragrant violet bed.

Glowing pansies, streak'd with gold,
Of your couch shall form the seat;
And the daisy shall unfold
Her buds for stools to bear to your feet.

Instead of tent or costly dome,
The wood-rose shall her leaves supply;
And shed around their soft perfume,
And veil you from each prying eye.

The woodbine's tassels, light and gay,
As banners o'er your roof be seen;
And just admit the moon's soft ray
To glide their turning stems between.

The cowslip's blossoms fill'd with dew,
Shall as your flowing cups be crown'd;
And strawberries of bright scarlet hue,
And bilberries blue shall there be found.

The cherry ripe as beauty's lip,
The currant stain'd with various dyes—
Oh, haste! their nectar'd juice to sip,
Ere its sweet dewy coolness flies!

The nightingale her song shall pour,
Her emerald torch the glow-worm bring;
Then—haste to share the jocund hour,
The blooming banquet of the Spring!

As ceas'd the song—a youthful band
Come gaily dancing hand in hand;

Robes that might deck some airy fay
Did every slender form array;
Whilst their light steps scarce touch the ground,
Admiring whispers murmur round.

A fair one next stepped forth to view
More fully form'd; more high the hue
That glow'd upon her blooming cheek,
Which seem'd more ripen'd age to speak;
Her tresses of dark auburn glow
Wore mimic roses all in blow;
Large, full, and bright her hazle eye,
And her rich robe of saffron dye;
Louder, yet sweet, she sung the strain
Which spoke the joy of Summer's reign.

THE PRIDE OF SUMMER.

Spring may boast her blooming flowers,
And the note of songsters gay;
Her unripe fruits, her scarce-clothed bowers,
And all the pride of closing May.

Spring may boast her cowslip beds,
And her violets' purple dye;
Oft are droop'd their languid heads
Beneath the yet uncertain sky.

Spring may boast her woodbine pale,
And her eglantine's faint bloom;
Oft, the evening's icy gale
Sweeps, and seals their early doom.

But my treasures safely stand
Beneath the sun's meridian glow;
My fragrant flowers untrain'd expand,
And through my fruits ripe juices flow!

Mine 's the nightingale's full song,
Mine the glow-worm's emerald light,
Seen thick-shaded banks along,
In my scarcely-darken'd night!

Mine 's the warm soft tranquil air,
Mine the balmy breathing gale,
Mine each dew-drop glittering there,
The gentle star of eve to hail!

Then haste, ye Sylphs!—ye Fairies, haste!
To dance beneath the oak's deep shade;
O come, my ripen'd fruits to taste,
Ere the full bloom of Summer fade!

Then came a band of dancers gay,
Dress'd like those who tend the hay;
But though in make and form the same,
The different texture must proclaim
That hat of straw and rustic vest
Conceal'd the form of youthful guest!
All Glanville's graceful figure knew,
And his thick curls of auburn hue.

Next came a lady—though still fair,
Who wore more of a matron's air;
She had not Spring's fair neck of snow,
Or Summer's cheek of rosy glow;
A mellower tint her skin display'd,
Yet not unpleasing was the shade;

Well it agreed with her dark eye
And braided locks of raven dye,
With glowing wreath of poppies bound,
And ears of wheat and barley crown'd;
Whilst a full robe of olive green
Suited with her majestic mien;
In mellow voice she sung the lay,
Autumn's rich bounty to display.

THE SONG OF HARVEST.

Spring and Summer both are fair,
Both may boast their flowerets' dye,
Both may boast their balmy air,
And their cloudless azure sky;

Spring may boast her blossom'd boughs
Waving in the vernal gale;
And her songsters' warbled vows,
Echoing down each peaceful vale;

Summer may her Rose expand,
And her early fruit display,
And call forth the jocund band,
To spread around the fragrant hay:

But, though fair the blossoms blow,
The brow of blooming May to deck;
And the moisten'd fruit may grow,
Summer's fervid thirst to check:

Vie they with the bounteous store
That my teeming fields supply,
When—the golden Harvest o'er—
Rises the shout of grateful joy?

Mine 's the treasure of the bee,
For me the luscious dew she blends,
Mine the produce of each tree
That 'neath its weight o'erloaded bends!

Mine 's the calm, still, tranquil day,
Suited to the Poet's dream,
Whilst the fading woods display
A deep, rich, mellow changing gleam!

Mine 's that bright majestic Moon,
That spreads around her lengthen'd light,
As though she fear'd to close too soon
The pleasures of the harvest night!

Then come, ye sportive Elves! who love
Beneath her silver beams to glide;
Come, come, ripe Autumn's bounty prove
The treasures of her festive tide!

Whilst is heard a harvest horn,
With hats bedeck'd with bands of corn,
Or hair with poppy garlands crown'd,
A group of rustics dance around;
Though reaping Youth and gleaning Maid
Sure signs of higher state display'd.

Now came a reverend form in view,
Array'd in robe of darkest hue,
Trimm'd with thick furs, costly and rare;
A branch of holly grac'd his hair,
On which the scarlet berries glow,
Worn o'er a hood that vied with snow;

A leafless bough, instead of wand,
With ivy twined, sustain'd his hand;
Air, form, and voice, the Bard display,
Who raised in Winter's praise his lay.

INVITATION OF WINTER.

Boast not of your blossom'd bowers,
And your songsters' jocund strain;
Your ripen'd fruits, your glowing flowers,
What are these to Winter's reign?

Though my breath may bid the snow
Hide the Earth with chilly veil,
Mine 's the genial hearth's warm glow,
Mine the merry Christmas tale!

Though my touch the floods may bind,
And bid the frozen earth resound;
I can call each kindred mind
To meet the social board around!

Though at my wish the drenching shower
In one unceasing flood descends;
Will ye not all confess—my power
Has hither brought a band of friends?

Though my voice may rouse the storm
To sweep along the darken'd skies,
Here I brought each beauteous form—
Beam for me those melting eyes!

Chide me not as being cold,
Or say that chillness I impart—
I appeal to young and old,
Is there here one frozen heart?

Not to rank or wealth alone
Opens wide this friendly door;
Here is genuine bounty shown
To the stranger and the poor!

Spring her blossoms may display—
Summer's ripen'd fruits may glow—
Autumn boast her harvest gay—
'Tis for me their treasures flow!

All their choicest stores are mine;
Now hither bring with willing care,
Ye Sylphs, bring in the rosy wine!
Fays! in the tempting banquet bear!

He spake—and instant open flew
The painted skreens—and to their view
A table, gaily deck'd, displayed,
Whilst every noble youth and maid—
Still in each dress which late had been
Worn in that curious Masque's gay scene—
Follow'd fair Blanch and nine Fays more,
Who in the weighty Twelfth Cake bore!
Now all to know their partners drew,
In harmless mirth the moments flew,
Until the bell, from Cover's tower,
Proclaim'd the next the midnight hour;
For 'twas agreed—that all should stay
To join the rites of Christmas day!
Taking the grace-cup in his hand,
Trinian address'd the noble band;—

Ye who have kindly deign'd to share
The sports that smooth the brow of care,
And give the heart a cordial glow
Despite of storm and wintry snow—
Accept the pledge I now commend,
Though here our Christmas revels end.
May not one painful thought arise
Whilst dwelling on these harmless joys,
And may each day throughout the year
Be spent with friends as true, as dear!
And when near clos'd its rapid flight
May all meet here next Christmas night!

NOTES.

Note 1.—Page 7, line 10.

"Mossdale's wild romantic vale.

Mossdale, or Morsedale, is a small but romantic valley, which branches off from Wensley-dale at Appersite; it is remarkable for the number of its waterfalls. Chopper-gill, situated near the remains of the ancient wood of Blackrash is a scene that would have suited the pencil of Salvator. Cotter is of a softer character, and, though small, may, for finished beauty, vie with any similar scene in Britain; possessing all that can be desired in rock, wood, and water: a rude bridge of riven oak, thrown across from rock to rock, above the fall, completes the picture.

Note 2.—Page 8, line 20.

"I sing the legend of the deer."

The foundation of this tale is true. The body of an outlaw was left in the manner described, and the following

Christmas a fine stag, with a label round his neck, as stated in this Poem. An old family friend has often told me, that she remembered being shown the place of his interment in her youth, though the circumstance occurred about two centuries since. The rest of the legend is altogether imaginary.

Note 3.—Page 22, line 3.

"From Cover's Friars that slowly pass."

Helwesia, the daughter and heiress of Ranulph de Glanville, a baron and chief-justice of England, with the consent of Wallran, her son and heir then living, founded a monastery of canons of the Præmonstratensian order, at Swayneby, towards the end of the reign of Henry II. She died in 1195, and her bones were afterwards translated from Swayneby, and buried in the Chapter-house at Coverham.

Raduiphus, the son of Robert, Lord of Middleham, brother and heir to Wallran, having many disputes with the canons of Swayneby, removed them, and founded Coverham Abbey in Coverdale, near Middleham, and granted them the Church of Coverham, with many lands and tenements.

The ruins of this Abbey, which was destroyed by the Scots in the reign of Henry VII., stand on the north side of the river, or rather the rapid brook of Cover, which gives name to the dale; a dale, that whatever claim it may have to cultivation, must be said to suffer in the comparative view of size and beauty from its vicinity to the noble one of Wensley Dale.

On a stone taken from the Abbey, which now forms a part of the late building, are the figures 741; but what this date has originally alluded to is left to conjecture. About fifty years ago, there were here dug up two statues larger than life, habited in the armour of Knights Templars, in a recumbent posture, ornamented with foliage and animals; but in a style almost too rude for the grossest period of the Gothic ages. These statues are now placed on each side of the Gateway which leads up to the ruins.

Note 4.—Page 26, line 20.

"The mystic log is duly laid."

The Yule, or Christmas Log, was a huge block of oak, partly consumed on Christmas-day,—the remainder reserved as a preservative from fire for the ensuing year, and used to kindle the log at the succeeding Christmas.

Note 5.—Page 26, line 22.

"A merry band of Mummers come."

A kind of morrice-dancers, who, in dumb show, exhibited a rude species of pantomime.

Note 6.—Page 31, line 2.

"And the lone lake expands her breast."

Simmer Water, a small lake, which Camden speaks of as 'the Poole of Semer.'

Note 7.—Page 33, line 1.

" ——— the wild tale from Mona's Isle."

Of Mona, or the Isle of Man, Camden writes thus:—" Ptolomee termeth it Monœda, as one would say, Moneitha, that is, if I may be allowed to conjecture—*the more remote Mona*, to put a difference betweene it and the remote Mona, that is, Anglesey."

Note 8.—Page 40, line 8.

" And o'er the seaman's destin'd grave
Was heard the boding Dolkin's yell."

The Dolkin, or Dollakin, is a kind of mermaid, that still possesses a great influence over the imaginations and even the actions of the Manks fishermen. Whole fleets of boats, manned by that hardy race, are even in these days known to return in the height of the fishing season, when they suppose they have seen her. They describe her as something very white, rather larger than a woman, seen at a distance, on some particular shelves of their rocky coast. A storm is certain to follow her appearance, in which those must inevitably perish, say they, who slight her warning.

It seems probable, from their confidence on this point, that there is really some phenomenon which indicates a storm, like the little white cloud observed in the tropics, called by sailors, *the Giant's Hand*, and sometimes *the Ox's Eye*. The Dolkin is also said to yell, as in triumph over those who perish. Music preceding the death of any branch

of some favoured families, is still commonly believed in the island, as well as in Scotland, and some of the northern counties of England.

Note 9.—Page 46, line 8.

" Stands Colonsay's rude massive pile."

Colonsay is an island to the south of the western coast of Scotland; it exceeds most others in wildness and the loftiness of its surrounding rocks.

Note 10.—Page 59, line 1.

" The organ joins its lofty tone."

The organ was invented in France, in the reign of Charlemagne.—*The French Chronicles.*

Note 11.—Page 65, line 7.

" As the prophetic spirit came."

In ancient times, the name of Poet and Prophet were the same.—*Cowper.*

Note 12.—Page 86, line 6.

" Thy wondrous Abbey, Furness!"

The situation of the Abbey of Furness, in the vale of Nightshade, so favourable to a contemplative life, justifies the choice of the first settlers. Such a sequestered site, in

the bosom of a deep dell, through which a hasty brook rolls its murmuring stream, and along which the roaring west wind would often blow, joined with the deep-toned matin-song, must have been very favourable to the solemn melancholy of a monastic life.

The magnitude of the Abbey may be known from the dimensions of the ruins; and enough is standing to show the style of the architecture. The round and pointed arches occur in the doors and windows. The fine clustered Gothic and the heavy plain Saxon pillars stand contrasted. The walls show excellent masonry, are in many places counter-arched, and the ruins discover a strong cement. The east window has been noble; and some of the painted glass that once adorned it, is preserved in a window, in the church of Bowness, on the banks of Windermere Lake. On the outside of the window, under an arched festoon, is the head of the founder Stephen, Earl of Montaign and Bologne; and opposite to it that of Maud his queen, both crowned, and well executed. In the south wall and east end of the church are four seats, adorned with Gothic ornaments. In the middle space, where the first barons of Kendal are interred, lies a procumbent figure of a man in armour, cross-legged. The Chapter-house has been a noble room of sixty feet by forty-five. The vaulted roof, formed of twelve ribbed arches, was supported by six pillars on two rows, at thirteen feet distance from each other. Now, supposing each of the pillars to be two feet in diameter, the room would be divided into three alleys or passages, each thirteen feet wide. On the entrance, the middle one only could be seen, lighted by a pair of tall, pointed windows, at the upper end of the room; the company in the side passage would be concealed by the pillars, and the

vaulted roof that groined from these pillars, would have a truly Gothic disproportionate appearance, of sixty feet by thirteen. The two side alleys were lighted each by a pair of smaller lights, besides another pair at the upper end, at present entire, and which illustrate what is here said. Thus, whilst the upper end of the room had a profusion of light, the lower end would be in the shade. The noble roof of this singular edifice did but lately fall in, and the entrance, or porch, is still standing, a fine circular arch, beautified with a deep cornice, and a portico on each side. The only entire roof now remaining, is of a building without the enclosure wall. It was the school-house of the abbot's tenants, and is a single ribbed arch that groins from the wall.

The tower has been supported by four magnificent arches, of which only one remains entire. They rested upon four tall pillars, whereof three are finely clustered, but the fourth is of a plain unmeaning construction.—WEST's *Guide.*

Note 13.—Page 131, line 24.

"Quench'd is the taper's blazing light."

At the close of that tremendous ceremony, a Roman Catholic excommunication, a taper is always extinguished.

Note 14.—Page 146, line 12.

"From Cotter's top enraptur'd gaze."

Cotter is a high mountain which forms the head of Mossdale, whence issues a small river of the same name, which

has not fewer than five beautiful falls in the course of about four miles.

Note 15.—Page 164, line 12.

"Proud Peel!—thy heir to life shall spring."

Peel Castle stands upon a small inland on the north-west coast of Man: in very low tides, the sands may be crossed on foot, but it is now connected with the main land by a causeway. Within the walls of this castle are the remains of four churches, besides the cathedral, in which the bishop is still enthroned, though it is now roofless. From the high land adjoining, may, on a clear day, be seen, England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.

Note 16.—Page 165, line 4.

"They bade the beacon-turret blaze."

The Beacon-turret is a detached, lofty, narrow tower, standing within the walls of Peel Castle, open to the top, without floor or staircase, and appears designed to throw to a great height the light of the fire when kindled inside, so that it might be seen at an immense distance.

Note 17.—Page 165, line 12.

"With noble Stanley should return."

According to Camden, "In the yeere 1393, Man, with the crowne thereof, was sold for a great summe of money, by William Montacute, Earle of Salisbury, unto William Scrope, who, being for high-treason beheaded, and his

goods confiscate, it came unto the hands of Henry the Fourth, King of England, who granted this island unto Henry Percie, Earle of Northumberland. But in the fifth yeere following, the said Henry Percie entred into open rebellion, and the King sent Sir John Stanley and William Stanley to seize the Isle and Castle of Man, the inheritance whereof he granted afterward to Sir John Stanley and his heires, by letters patents, with the patronage of the bishopricke, &c. And so his heires and successours, who were honoured with the title of Earles of Derby, were commonly called Kings of Man."

Note 18.—Page 168, line 8.

"A little fluttering, twittering wren."

The wren is still regarded by the Manx people as possessing supernatural intelligence. They say, that when St. Maghull came to the island, and converted it to Christianity, he banished all the fairies but their queen, who assumed the form of a wren, in which she at times still appears; and that, if in that shape she can be killed, her power will cease for ever. They hate this bird, but fear to destroy it, as some dire calamity will befall the person and all his family, who effects the destruction of the reign of the fairies in Man.

There are several stones in the island, probably of Runic origin, which are hollowed at the top; into this cavity the milk-maids dash a little milk from their hand, as they return from the fields, for an offering to the fairies. I saw one near Ramsay, in which the milk was not dry. Such indeed, is the superstition of these people, that it is

customary with some not to use the liver of poultry, but to throw it over the left shoulder, as a fairy offering.

Note 19.—Page 184, line 1.

"The fell Mauthe-douge—a lingering gnome."

The existence of every species of supernatural influence seems to be regarded with religious respect, by the simple honest natives of the Isle of Man; but to doubt the existence of the Mauthe-douge, would be regarded as a heresy of the most terrific description. It is said to appear in the Guard-room of Peel Castle, in the form of a large shaggy dog, at twelve o'clock, and to retire at the first dawn of day. It was once followed by an English soldier, but he returned speechless, and died three days after. There is a full account of this spectre to be found in a note to Sir Walter Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel," taken from "Waldron's Description of the Isle of Man." I was told its history whilst in the vault, which is regarded as its supposed home. This vault is under the cathedral, and there, we are told, Eleanor, wife of Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester, uncle to Henry VI., died, after an imprisonment of twenty-six years, under a charge of witchcraft. It is supported by curiously groined arches, and has a large window at the end, opposite to the staircase which leads down to it;—although about three feet below the surface, it is perfectly dry, and rather light than otherwise.

Note 20.—Page 193, line 1.

"Thus spake young Edwin————."

Edwin, King of Deira, now Yorkshire and Lancashire,

was deprived of his throne, and driven into exile, by his uncle, Ethred, King of Northumbria, or Northumberland, but found shelter and protection at the court of Redwold, King of East Anglia. A mysterious person is said to have appeared to him, as he sat near the river Lea, at midnight, under some doubts of Redwold's sincerity; however, he afterwards married Edelburga, Redwold's daughter, regained his kingdom, and united with it the kingdom of Northumbria. Edwin was converted to christianity by Paulinus, a legate from Rome, who resembled in person and action the visionary form he had seen. The Idol Temple at Godmundingham, now called Godmundham, on the banks of the river Derwent, was destroyed by him and his followers. The Lance was thrown, not by Edwin himself, but by Cofi, the high priest of Thor and Friga, who was also converted and baptized with the king and ten thousand other persons; and this is the only change of circumstances I have made from the old Catholic legend. The mythological scenes are wholly imaginary. The story upon which this Legend is founded, is given at some length in Mr. Southey's interesting "Book of the Church."

Note 21.—Page 206, line 6.

"Save the deep boom of water-fowl."

The boom of the Bittern, or Mire-drum, is here alluded to. The only time I ever heard the loud and solemn note of this bird, was from a small woody island, formed by a branch of the river Lea, at a short distance from Waltham Abbey, in Essex. The boom of which is, as Goldsmith in his Natural History, justly observes, louder even than the bellowing of an ox.

Note 22.—Page 225, line 7.

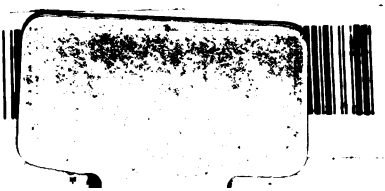
" When Nappa's hall shall boast a sport,
That lately had been shown at court."

The Masque was an entertainment first introduced at the court of Edward IV. In Miss Aikin's History of James the First, are several minute and elegant descriptions of these entertainments. Mr. D'Israeli, in his most interesting work, " Curiosities of Literature," (Second Series,) gives the plot of one composed by Ben Jonson;—the parts were sustained by James's queen, and ladies of the highest rank and quality of that day.

Note 23.—Page 226, line 5.

" Who would from curtain'd litter peep."

Coaches were first introduced not until the year 1589, toward the close of the reign of Elizabeth. At the date of this poem ladies had no other mode of travelling than such as are therein described.

THE END.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY W. CLOWES,
Northumberland-court.